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April 1979
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Nicholas von Hoffman on Richard Nixon
Thomas Szasz on Police Brutality

Roy Childs Jr., Earl Ravenal, Murray Rothbard, David Henderson, Milton Mueller, Justin Raimondo and Daniel Webster:
The Battle over Conscription

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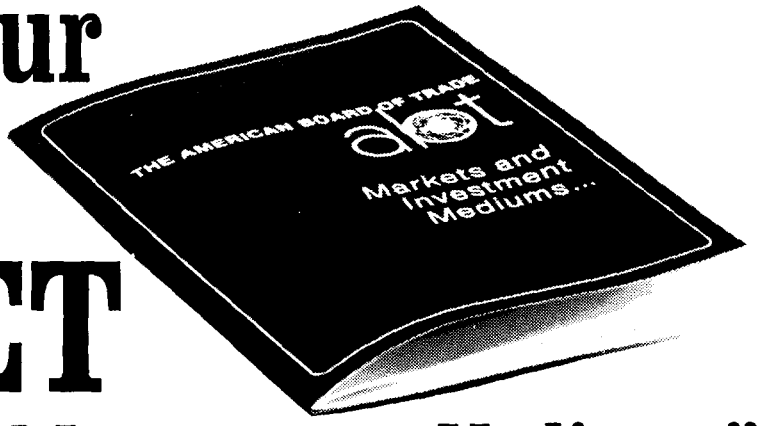

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THE LIBERTARIAN REVIEW

April 1979
Volume 8, No. 3

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Address Change: Write new address, city, state and zip code on sheet of plain paper, attach mailing label from recent issue of LR, and send to Circulation Department, Libertarian Review, P.O. Box 28877, San Diego, CA 92128. Second class postage paid at San Francisco and additional offices.

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THE LIBERTARIAN EDITORIALS

Quagmire in the middle east

THE TUMULTUous cheers which greeted President Carter's success in arranging the Egypt-Israeli peace treaty had about them an air of exhaustion. There had been so many media events, so many "dramatic breakthroughs" and instances of "shuttle diplomacy" over the years that, well, the thing seemed anticlimactic. Even PLO leader Yasir Arafat's heated denunciations seemed like a rerun; and when, perhaps inspired by the now less-than-angelic Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, Arafat threatened "to chop off the hands" of Carter, Begin and, *especially*, Anwar Sadat, it rated no more than a casual mention in the press, as if reporters, stifling a yawn, were saying, "We've heard it all before."

And yet, reaction to the peace treaty, as *Time* magazine naturally reminded us, had "nearly been unanimously positive." From left to right, from *Fortune* and the *Wall Street Journal* to *The New Republic*, everyone (conceding certain "minor problems") thought the treaty a welcome event. Peace was at hand. Or so we are told.

This sort of complacency will do no one any good, and it is time it was shattered. No one is looking carefully at the treaty, or its likely consequences. Even the most tough-minded observers seem possessed of sadly blurred vision as they confront it, as though they were afraid of seeing it too clearly. They know that other treaties, in other areas and other times, have led not to peace, but to disaster. If we are not to be deluded by media puffery, we should look at this treaty and its probable consequences through the critical eyes of history. The treaty itself is possessed of such vagueness, such utter lack of realism and common sense, that it is difficult to predict anything ahead except an even greater crisis in the Middle East.

On nearly every key issue, the agreement is vague and evasive. As *The Economist* of London argued in its March 10 issue,

> The American package seems to be a masterpiece of diplomatic legerdemain, offering each side everything and nothing at the same time. It would give the contested parts the magician's treatment: they vanish before your very eyes. The most contentious element is Egypt's insistence on—and Israel's rejection of—clauses that would tie the implementation of the peace treaty to progress towards the creation of a self-governing structure for the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and to a commitment to determine the final status of these territories after five interim years of self-rule.
>
> It seems that Israel has accepted a letter, to accompany the peace treaty, providing for negotiations on Palestinian self-government to begin one month after the treaty is ratified. The negotiations are "intended" to be completed within a year, whereupon a general election is to be arranged. In other words, no target date has been fixed for the autonomous institutions to go into operation. The American proposal goes on to say that if the negotiations run into trouble through no fault of Israel's, meaning obstructiveness on the part of Jordan or the Palestinians inside and outside the West Bank and Gaza, Israel will not be held to account, and the peace treaty will be implemented regardless, without delay. With no Palestinians inside or outside the two territories willing to talk autonomy at present, the American formula wafts into the blue yonder.
>
> Similarly disposed of by a wave of the American wand, it appears, is the other principal bone of contention, Clause 6. Originally, this upheld the priority of the treaty over the parties' other commitments, including Egypt's defense treaties with other Arab nations. Now a second accompanying letter shamelessly declares that, while both parties agree that no treaty with a third party should have priority over the peace treaty, they also agree that the peace treaty will not take precedence over any other commitment. That should keep flocks of legal experts happy for years.

But that is only the tip of the iceberg. For the truth of the matter is that, having learned the narrowest possible lesson from the collapse of the Shah of Iran, the Carter administration is plunging headlong into a bottomless abyss in the Middle East, a new quagmire from which emergence may not even be possible, short of a fundamental change in the basic principles underlying American foreign policy. Not only will the hapless American taxpayer be forced to pour tens of billions of dollars into the Middle East as economic and military "aid" over the next few years, but the military involvement of the American government is becoming ever greater.

This phase of the Middle East crisis comes in the aftermath of the collapse of the Shah, and it is important to see American foreign policy in that light. For it is in the wake of the Iranian revolution and the total failure of the American foreign policy of the last quarter century that the Carter Administration is now attempting to construct a new policy—based on an Egypt-Israeli peace treaty—of *increased* U.S. involvement in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. The aim is allegedly to "guarantee" the *continued* flow of oil from the area and to form a regional anti-Soviet coalition of Israel,

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Egypt and "conservative" (read feudal) Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, which is thus far playing it safe by maintaining a respectable distance from this new turn in American foreign policy. So too, realizing what Carter is up to, are Jordan and Syria.

As if to leave nothing to the imagination, we have heard a litany of voices from within the administration itself in recent weeks about stepping up U.S. "presence," as it is so quaintly called, in the Middle East. Defense Secretary Brown concluded that

> The U.S. is trying to divide and rule by . . . transferring some of the Arabs to the Israeli side. There are also U.S. attempts to create an atmosphere of tension in the area—for instance, movements of the U.S. Navy in the Arabian Sea under the pretext of events between the two Yemens. [The purpose was to] intimidate some Arab countries and convince others that the U.S. will come to protect them. This gives us a pretty good picture of Washington's intention to let the region sink deeper into conflicts as a means for U.S. policy to achieve its targets.

WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

has said that the U.S. will play "a more active and visible role in the area." Sinister Energy Secretary James Schlesinger has even stated that the U.S. is prepared to use *military force* if necessary to "protect" our allies and secure U.S. access to oil. These sorts of threats, combined with massive American payoffs to the Arab and Israeli governments, are supposed to make matters more stable in the Middle East. The truth is precisely the reverse. And neither is anyone being fooled by Carter's strategy. Syrian President Hafez Assad has listened to such threats, watched the treaty negotiations carefully, and

In its mindlessly militaristic response to the instability of the Middle East, in its fanatical desire to use foreign policy as a means of securing access to the precious crude, the Carter administration is offering us a virtual replay of the circumstances which led to the collapse of the Shah and the victory of the Iranian revolution.

The initial U.S. involvement in Iran grew out of the same concerns which motivate the new escalation of Mideast involvement: a concern with stability and with oil. The CIA-sponsored coup which installed the Shah in the early 1950s began twenty-five years of deepening involvement which led in the end to this year's revolution. We built up the Shah's military power, and encouraged state-planning and control of the economy to "modernize" Iran with its state-controlled revenue from its oil production. As oil revenues poured in over the years, state planning was increased drastically, as was spending on weapons. The dramatic increase in oil revenues in the past few years made matters even worse. The amount of money spent on the Shah's five year plan ending in March 1978 was nearly *doubled* from initial planned amounts—from a projected $36-billion to more than $70-billion—and it enabled the Shah to increase his military spending *tenfold*, in his absurd and self-destructive bid to replace Britain as the dominant power in the Persian Gulf. Socialist national economic planning, then, combined with coerced economic growth—which still passes among most "development economists" for "modernization"—and fanatical militarism, were what led to the upheavals in Iran. U.S. involvement gave focus to diverse opposition groups, enabling them to unite—from Marxist left to Muslim right—in a mighty and successful effort to drive out the oppressive Shah and end American dominance. The Iranian revolution was thus produced in no small measure by American intervention designed to prepare Iran as a proxy military force which could be used to "secure" Western access to the all-important crude oil.

It is in the light of this sequence of events that one must evaluate the utter absurdity of an American foreign policy which would repeat precisely the same actions now, in the post-Shah era. *Fortune* magazine recently recognized the potential instability caused by further increases in oil revenue, citing "internal political upheaval" as the greatest danger in the Middle East. "The rise in oil prices," it pointed out, "has been a big contributing factor."

> It worsened the economic difficulties of countries that don't have oil, and it created serious social stresses for countries that do. As the money poured in, some oil countries embarked on hurried development programs. The results have included social dislocation, culture shock, and grand-scale corruption. (April 9, 1979)

U.S. News has pointed out problems which Saudi Arabia is having, at the same time that the U.S. is making of itself an excellent target for discontent by virtue of its attempted Saudi Arabia-Egypt-Israeli alliance in the region:

> The Saudis are . . . troubled by woes at home, where rapid modernization is creating serious problems. Their five-year, $142-billion development program is fueling inflation, causing severe labor shortages—foreigners make up 50 percent of the 2-million man work force—and unraveling the country's traditional tribal society. (March 12, 1979)

While we might welcome the "unraveling" of Saudi Arabia's "traditional tribal society," we should be aware that the alternative

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which is being built is, quite simply, state socialism with central economic planning. Nearly all the nations's income is funneled through the state apparatus, with its monopoly control of massive oil reserves. (The same thing is now beginning in Mexico.)

Egypt, of course, is one of the nations in the Middle East with precious little oil. This is having effects of its own, such as forcing Anwar Sadat into a position of complete dependence upon largess from the United States and its oil-rich neighbors—who, naturally enough, being shocked at the Egypt-Israeli peace treaty, are considering sanctions against Sadat. But that is only part of the problem. As *The Nation* has pointed out, "Egypt's economy has been falling apart for a very long time now and, like Italy, the country has survived many premature obituaries. But in recent years the position has become truly chronic, and the International Monetary Fund was forced to impose very strict terms." That is the root of Sadat's motivation for signing the peace treaty: to secure massive influxes of American economic and military aid. In addition to aid already promised, the U.S. has pledged to drastically step up future aid to Egypt and Israel, both in weapons and in cash. Sadat has been beating the drum for a new version of the "Marshall Plan" for his country—calling it a "Carter Plan"—and, according to *The Nation*, a price tag of *$21-billion* has been affixed to that plan, over the next few years.

In military aid, the situation is still worse. Ignoring the true lesson of Iran, Sadat seems, if anything, even more blind than Carter: according to the *Washington Post* (2/21/79), Sadat has said that, if the U.S. would equip his army with billions of dollars in modern weaponry, his forces would assume responsibility "for ensuring stablity in a region stretching from Algeria east to Afghanistan, and from the Mediterranean south into sub-Sahara Africa to Somalia and beyond." *This* comes, you understand, from the captain of a bankrupt economy totally dependent on aid from the U.S. and the conservative Arab states. This kind of emulation of the Shah can only end in the same sort of ruin which overtook Iran. This blindness, stubbornness and megalomania is what American taxpayers are being coaxed into subsidizing. This is what the treaty is bringing to Egypt, and it is no cause for elation. Israel is not in much better shape. As *Business Week* has written,

> "Israel's economy, already beset by a 50 percent annual inflation rate, will be heated up even more by an estimated $4-billion worth of spending in the next few years on relocation of Israeli military bases and civilian settlement. Jacob Levinson, chairman of Bank Hapoalim, predicts that prices will spiral upward even faster, and that Israel 'will continue to head the inflation list among the developed countries.'"

But more than that: at a time when it can barely predict its own supply and access to oil, the United States, after promising billions upon billions in military and economic aid to Israel as well as Egypt, has also pledged to "guarantee" *Israeli* access to oil *for fifteen years*. And this pledge is being taken seriously! But the loans and grants to Israel are only part of the problem. The situation is becoming so bad for Israel's economy that more Jews are now leaving Israel to live elsewhere than are settling in Israel from other countries. Oppressive taxation and inflation are causing people to flee for a saner life elsewhere. Already the Israelis are outdistanced by the Arabs in Israel in terms of birthrate; combined with a continued emigration of Jews from Israel, this will likely lead to an Arab majority within Israel itself within a decade or two. Short of further expulsion of Arabs—which would enrage the Palestinians and Israel's Arab neighbors even more—it is difficult to see how Israel can respond to this population pressure within its political system. It amounts to a short fuse in an explosive area.

Consider, then, the utter and complete instability of the area. Consider the likely inflammatory results of U.S. intervention, which is going to be escalated—along with possible military bases in Israel and even (it is being discussed) an Israeli-American "mutual defense treaty." And consider the inanity of the Carter program to form a regional anti-Soviet coaliton of Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. It is like a foreign policy put together by someone in grade school.

If the Saudis and other Arabs should *agree* to this odd couple arrangement, it will not only play into the hands of the radical Arabs and pro-Soviet elements in the Middle East, but will *also* reinforce the most reactionary religious elements, who already oppose Western intervention in the region. This will lead to further instability in the Middle East, and, like the Shah, both Saudi Arabia and Anwar Sadat will be threatened by internal forces.

If, on the other hand, Saudi Arabia and other Arab states *do not* go along with this, it may mean the cutoff of Arab aid to Egypt's already bankrupt economy, the mounting of offensives against Sadat, and further restriction on U.S. access to oil.

Either way, the American people will lose. As taxpayers, and consumers of energy, and human beings, they are being manipulated by an administration which combines frightening incompetence with grandiose dreams. President Carter has accepted the responsibility of further U.S. involvement in one of the most unstable regions in the world, in the name of "stability." He runs the risk of war, in the name of "peace." He plays into the hands of the Soviets, in the name of pro-feudal "anticommunism." He has placed the American government right in the middle of the unsolvable Palestinian problem, has made pledges to both Egypt and Israel that cannot possibly be kept. He is sustaining the self-delusions of both the Israelis and Sadat, and is using the treaty as a springboard for "a major drive to establish a significant American military presence in the Mideast." (*U.S. News*).

Carter has learned nothing from Vietnam and nothing from Iran. He is responding to growing problems caused by intervention by escalating that very intervention. His policies will lead to the opposite of their intended results.

What should we do instead? Again and again, it cannot be repeated too often: we need to pursue a foreign policy of strategic disengagement from the Middle East, and stop manipulating forces which we cannot control. We should revise our concepts of "national security" and "vital interests," realize that instablity is here to stay, cut back our defense budget and our foreign commitments, and let all energy prices fluctuate freely to reflect changing realities of supply and demand. The American economy can absorb and adjust to higher energy costs, which reflect a very real and growing international instability. But it cannot absorb the accelerating costs, risks, and moral corruption of a renewed worldwide interventionism aiming at incompatible goals, dragging

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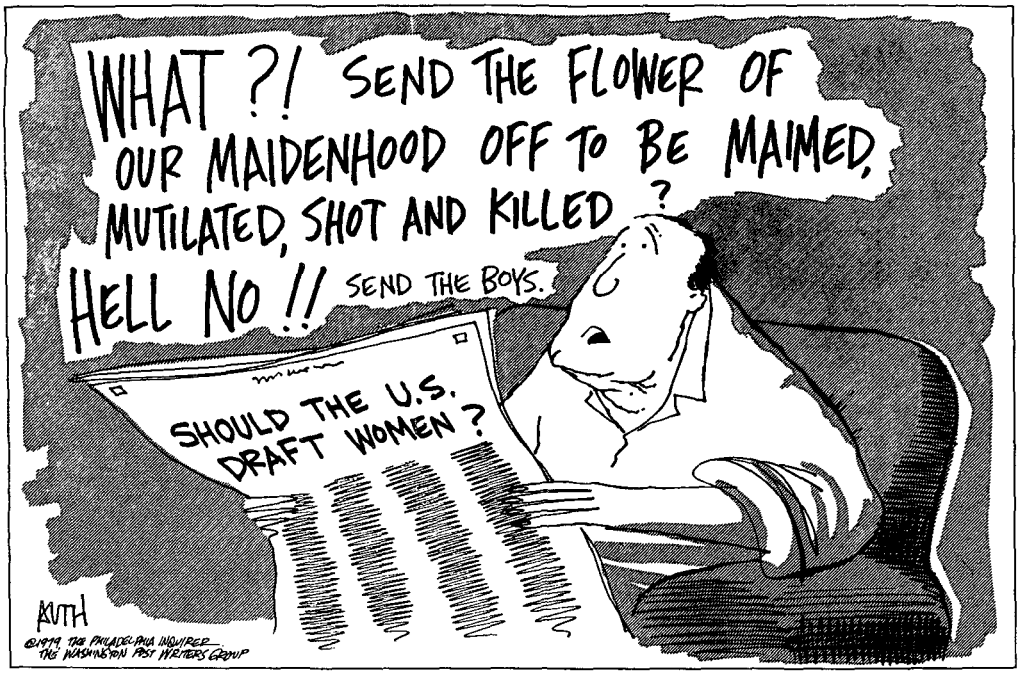
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SHOULD THE U.S. DRAFT WOMEN ?
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the U.S. into every conflict on the face of the globe, in the name of an illusory stability forever beyond its grasp.

Like the Treaty of Versailles, Carter's Middle East peace treaty sets the stage for disaster. Let us be rid of this man—and of this foreign policy—before it is too late. —RAC

Bringing back the draft

IN JUNE OF 1978, THE always-prescient *Libertarian Review* editorialized, in "Volunteer Army Under Attack," that

It is no secret to anyone who follows public discussions that there is today a significant and powerful lobby that would like to junk the volunteer army and bring back that hated American institution, the Draft. Every few months, some leftist will croon about his private dream of universal national service—military and nonmilitary alike—thus trying to cash in on a gushy, collectivistic "patriotism." Singing a brooding harmony to accompany the liberals' melody, the conservatives then bring out the old refrain—sung to the tune of a funeral march—about the decline of our military prowess.

Well, now the crooners are out in full force. Jerry Brown has chosen to play the role of the leftist gushing forth his private dream of universal national service, saying recently in Washington that he did indeed endorse the notion of compulsory service: "We ought to seriously consider some form of service to the country that would allow alternatives—whether it be Peace Corps, a civilian conservation corps [shades of F.D.R.!] or urban corps—as well as the traditional service in the military. We really do have an obligation to the country."

The brooding harmony has been sung by the nearly senile Senator John Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, who trots out the spectre of the Red Menace, claiming that the all-volunteer force "is weakening our defenses." If handled correctly, he fantasies, "young people will understand. But it is true that when you mention the draft to them, they have visions of another Vietnam. We must impress upon them that we're talking about a service to the country: the front line of our defense, our security."

Who said we don't have a host of divergent views presented to us in national politics?

In any case, the hidden agenda here has by now come to light, as pointed out by Earl Ravenal, Murray Rothbard, David Henderson and Justin Raimondo in this issue. With the concept of "vital interests" and "national security" now extended from China and Korea to Angola and Zaire, and from the Middle East to Western Europe, there is scarcely a conflict today anywhere on the globe that today's interventionists don't lust to enter. During the recent war between Vietnam and China, you could hear the weeping from those who felt left out of things: their hearts were breaking. When he was in China not too long ago, National Security Advisor Brzezinski, always one for the Big Picture and Global Responsibility, joked: "Last one to the Great Wall gets to confront the Russians in Ethiopia!"

It was, sadly, not to be. And finding himself left out of the new Vietnam war as well, Brzezinski and his partners in crime began to twitch. They are getting desperate: not a war in months!

They may be down, but they're not out. Bringing back the draft is the first step in their latest attempt to meet our "global commitments." Libertarians should resolve not to let them have it. Under the leadership of Students for a Libertarian Society, which has already leaped into action, they have that chance, and should not let it pass.

—RAC

Guest Editorials

Liberty or empire?

THE LIABILITIES OF THE volunteer army that some foresaw six or seven years ago have now become apparent to all. There is the high cost of volunteer manpower; the declining pool of available people because of population trends; competition from the private sector because the economy is reviving and some of that (literal) "reserve army of the unemployed" are getting real jobs; and the fear of "racial imbalance" (we might end up with a black mercenary force). Worst of all, Europe, up to now the Army's playland, is getting expensive, our encampments there are a slum in the midst of affluence, and recruiting posters can no longer honestly look like airline ads.

This is a real problem—even though it is one that we have, to some extent, invented. For it is America's current foreign policy and national strategy that require at least the two-million-man armed force it has now. The question is: How are you going to keep that two-million-man force when they want to stay down on the farm, or in the inner city? Where are you going to get the missile-fodder and the anti-tank-fodder that even the most capital-intensive, technological military organization still needs?

The most fashionable solution is worse than the problem. The proposal favored in both conservative and liberal circles seems to be compulsory universal na-

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tional service for all young people, perhaps encompassing both civilian and military tasks—and at non-competitive wages, of course. In other words, bring back the draft. If you can't attract people, you force them. If they won't go, you arrest them. If they try to flee to Canada or Sweden, you blight the rest of their lives with jail records and dishonorable discharges. Call it what you will or put a democratic face on it: It is still involuntary servitude.

It is instructive to see even liberal opinion leaders reach for authoritarian remedies, as if it were just a matter of recruitment quotas and defense budgets. What is really at stake is the nature of our state and society and the role of our country in the world. The social limits we are experiencing on the size of our armed force, along with the zooming cost of major weapons systems (particularly naval ships), are the most important constraints on our military strategy and foreign policy. These two factors are finally driving the possiblity of global empire—or global defense, if you will—out of sight, and out of reach.

But the answer is not to institute intolerable social controls and deprive a whole age group of income and freedom. Arrogant bureaucrats, statist politicians and establishment propagandists have no right to think that our country can live indefinitely beyond the resources that citizens willingly yield to their government.

Something will have to give; but those who are proselytizing for the peacetime draft are confusing the constraint with the variable. They would turn the United States into a Sparta—and blame the Russians for it, no doubt. It is a measure of how far they have travelled from the original American conception that the state exists for the people, not the people for the state. This country needs a better corporate memory (insofar as it needs anything corporate at all).

It is even predictively uncertain that the American people wold sustain compulsory universal service. A society enthralled by Proposition 13 and tax resistance is undergoing a far-reaching and indescribable revolution against the state. It is not going to submit easily to conscription (which is, among other things, a concealed tax) to support an overdeveloped military apparatus or even the putative "national interests" that lie beyond.

There is another answer—one that grows more naturally out of the shape of the problem. We could cut our military organization and change our strategies accordingly. A total defense structure about 40 percent smaller—say 1¼-million men—would be sustainable on a voluntary basis. It is also a structure that would meet our core national security needs, through admittedly not guarantee all our worldwide interests. (The latter proposition, of course, is far from self evident. A case can be made, and documented by regional strategic analysis, but it is part of another debate—one that we should have some day, and may be forced to have.)

If our establishment succeeds in its design to enlist another generation to feed America's military machine and salvage America's control over the conduct of other nations, that will indeed be a travesty of the principles that were at the base of our constitutional system almost 200 years ago. By the time that bicentennial comes around in 1989, there will be little left to celebrate.

—**Earl C. Ravenal**

On being an American

I'VE GOT THE PAY-check blues again, and it made me start thinking about America, land of the free.

I had always interpreted that phrase to mean I was free to live my life the way I chose. I believed I had the right to make all decisions affecting my life as long as I didn't harm anyone or break any laws. I believed that the laws were there to protect me, and that people who broke them were criminals.

These concepts always sounded fine to me. I was sure I could live a happy, productive life within their framework, because I knew I was an honest, conscientious person responsible for my actions. I was proud to be an American.

I lived with this fantasy until I was 19 years old. That was when my husband received his draft notice, on our first wedding anniversary. Within days, the boy I had loved since I was 13 was gone. The government, which made the laws to "protect" me, said that he had to go where it sent him, and that he had to do what it ordered. If he didn't, he would be a criminal and could go to jail. And so they sent him to Vietnam. They risked his life without his consent. I didn't understand.

My husband came back safely after 11 months, and was honorably discharged from the service. We started a family, saved our money and bought a small house in Hermosa Beach, where we'd grown up. We were careful not to get into debt. Each year the property taxes on our small house increased; in 1976 they doubled, and

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then last year they doubled again. We couldn't afford the $2,400 that the government wanted—but this was our home, this was the town where we grew up. What were we to do? The government, which made laws to protect us, said that we had to pay if we wanted to stay. I didn't understand.

Proposition 13 lowered our property taxes, so that we could keep our home. But now the court is suggesting that soon my children may not be able to attend the school at the end of our street; they might have to ride a schoolbus for up to 40 minutes each way, to go to school in someone else's town. We chose to live in this town because we grew up here. It is a small community with lots of involved citizens. We wanted our children to have pride in their neighborhood, and in its school. The government, which makes rules to protect us, says that this is not important; something called integration (not education) is more important.

Receiving what's left after taxes of my first few paychecks of 1979 has prompted me to reflect on my life. I believe that I finally understand: I am not free at all; it is the government that's free to do what it wants. The laws are not designed to protect my family and me; they are designed to protect the government. And we, the people, support this system with our money, our children—our very lives. If we don't, we risk breaking the law.

Yes, now I understand, and I am not so sure how I feel anymore about being an honest, conscientious person responsible for my actions. America, land of the free—it rings hollow. I'm still proud to be an American, and I wouldn't want to live anywhere else, but I am not as naive as I once was.

—L. Timmons

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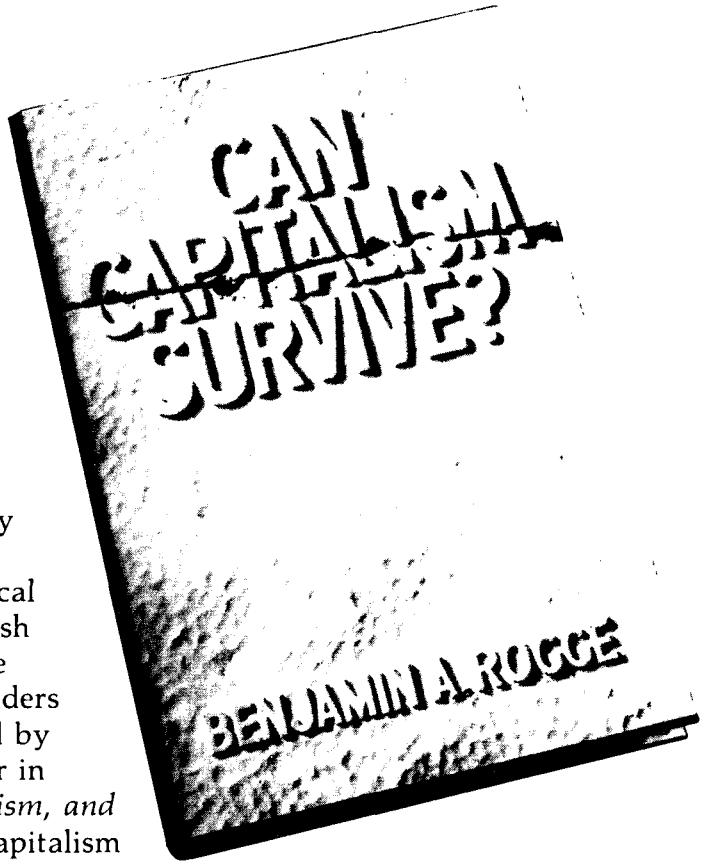

Can Capitalism Survive?

By Benjamin A. Rogge

Engaging, witty, insightful essays by the Distinguished Professor of Political Economy at Wabash College. In his title essay, Rogge considers the question posed by Joseph Schumpeter in *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy:* can capitalism survive? Other essays explore the philosophy of freedom, the nature of economics, the business system, labor markets, money and inflation, the problems of cities, education, and what must be done to ensure the survival of capitalism and free institutions. Hardcover $9.00, Paperback $3.50.

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OPENING SHOTS

BILL BIRMINGHAM

FOR COUNTERpoint to the sublime commentaries on the draft in this issue, here is an extract from "Why we need the draft," by one Guy Wright, the *San Francisco Examiner's* Paleolithic columnist: "In certain circles it's chic to say the draft is involuntary servitude. By that logic compulsory education becomes child labor. Sequestering a jury becomes false imprisonment. So much for sophists' word games." Indeed. Yet the reader will notice that Wright does have a certain brutish nose for inconsistency. Libertarians who persist in a sentimental fondness for the American state's "defense" establishment might think long and hard about Wright's question: "If it's permissible to draft a man in wartime, when he may get killed, isn't it preferable to draft him in peacetime, when his presence in uniform may [sic] prevent war?"

The Gallup Poll claims that 71% of the people approve, in their hearts if not their accelerators, of the loathesome 55 mile-per-hour speed limit. One is reminded of the Kansas electorate, who Mencken claimed would vote for prohibition as long as they were sober enough to stagger off to the polls.

Jack Lord, star of TV's "Hawaii Five-0," told the *New York Times'* Robert Trumbull "that the studio—whose address is 'Hawaii Five-0, Diamond Head Road'—had once received a Telex message from 'a responsible government agency'—which he refused to name to spare embarrassment—requesting 'Five-0's' help in tracking down a wanted criminal." "We hastened to reply," said Lord, "that 'Five-0' is purely fictional." Now if only someone will tell the Congressional Budget Office the same thing about The Incredible Hulk.

According to a study reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association, 97% of doctors questioned "prefer" to tell patients with cancer that they have the disease. As recently at 1961 fully 90% of the doctors surveyed preferred not to tell their cancer patients their diagnoses. Lest you think, however, that the nation's physicians have come around to the notion that the patient has some kind of right to know what's wrong with him, the authors of the study suggest that "perhaps more patients are being told because more need to know"—for the doctors' purposes. Many cancer patients (15% at the University of Rochester Medical Center, where the study was conducted) now take part in Federally funded research projects, and must be told of their disease so they can give the required "informed consent." Then too, an editorial in the same issue proposed such reasons as "the dramatic change in the malpractice situation that encourages physicians to minimize liability by transferring knowledge to the patient"; they may get sued if they don't tell. Anyone for reviving leechcraft?

The new "majority rule" government of Rhodesia–Zimbabwe will not govern the majority of the country. 90% of it is under martial law. The British *New Statesman* (January 19, 1979) quotes an official Rhodesian handout: "In martial law areas, the security forces can make their own laws to help them find and kill terrorists. They will not have to follow the ordinary laws, because that can take too much time . . . Here are some of the things the army can do in martial law areas: 1) They can arrest and detain people. 2) They can confiscate or destroy property such as huts and cattle. 3) They can make people work for them. The secret forces can now hold their own courts. These courts will have power to sentence people to gaol and death." And if they make a mistake, no problem. "Under the Terrorism and Public Order Act," says the *New Statesman*, "no action is taken against a soldier for torturing or killing a civilian provided he believed he acted with the security of the state in mind." But such measures are regretably necessary to stem the tide of African Communism. With out them, you may be sure, the guerrillas of the Patriotic Front would win and, um, impose a dictatorship.

Historical note: the *Mayaguez*, the freighter whose seizure by Cambodian gunboats for violating that country's territorial waters incited Jerry Ford's famous (and unnecessary) raid to free her, has been sold for scrap.

On March 4, 1979, the Mexican Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) celebrated fifty years of a near-monopoly of political power. Since its founding in 1929, PRI candidates have won every election for president, senator and state governor, and almost every election for the Chamber of Deputies. "Not surprisingly," notes the *New York Times* (March 4, 1979), "the party's longtime control of the country is admired by many governments that would like to per-

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petuate themselves in power. In recent years, several Latin American military regimes, including those of Brazil, El Salvador and Panama, have sent experts to study the party's magic formula." How that scurvy lot was received might be guessed by the list of those invited to the PRI's anniversay bash; representatives of "more than 100 political parties," including the Republocrats, the Soviet Communist Party—and "the ousted Cambodian regime of Pol Pot."

Lawyers for A. Ernest Fitzgerald, the Pentagon cost analyst (and libertarian) who revealed the $2-billion cost overrun on the Air Force's C-5A transport plane and lost his job for it, say that a just-released Nixon tape proves that the Tricky One personally ordered that he be fired; which should certainly help Fitzgerald's $3.5-million damage suit against Nixon and three of his White House aides. So there's a chance that the Monster Milhous may yet be stripped of his new-found status as a millionaire. Hasten that day; Tricky is being defended by (arrgh!) lawyers from the US Justice Department.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Ho hum. The Associated Press carried this little item: "A government committee has barred the repatriation of Arab villagers in northern Israel despite Prime Minister Menachem Begin's campaign promise that they would be allowed to return. They had fled during the 1948 war." Yet another broken campaign promise—how many does that make, since democracy was invented? But the story behind this one is enlightening. As one can read in any of several books [e.g.: David Hirst's excellent *The Gun and The Olive Branch* (New York, 1977)] the villagers had not "fled," they were thrown out by the Israeli military. The people of the Christian village of Biram got the Israeli Supreme court to rule that they could return; whereupon Israeli planes bombed their village and razed it to the ground. The villagers of Iqrit got a similar order from the Supreme Court, three years after they had been forced to leave their homes "for two weeks" until "military operations in the area were concluded." The military authorities refused to let them return; the Supreme Court decided to consider their case once more. "But a month and a half before that date," says Hirst, "on Christmas Day to be precise, the Israeli Defence Forces took the Mukhtar of this Christian community to the top of a nearby hill and forced him to watch the show—the blowing up of every house in the village—which they had laid on for his benefit." An enlightening tale indeed; and doubly piquant when one reads: "Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon said Wednesday the committee he heads ruled against the return of villagers to Iqrit and Biram to prevent any precedent for the return of other Arab refugees."

A bill which would have barred British schoolmasters from beating their handicapped pupils was killed by Conservative MP Tom Normanton, who does not approve of beating mentally handicapped children "because they don't know what they are doing," but opposed the bill because "I see no reason why any protection should be given to the physically handicapped." The real reason Normanton objected to caning cretins but not cripples may be mere self-interest. Mr. Normanton is not a cripple.

According to *Newsweek* (March 5, 1979), "European doctors" who examined the Shah of Iran last year "concluded that his brain was not getting enough blood to function properly." Strange. There was (and is) certainly plenty of blood on his hands . . ❑

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The battle over SALT revisited

THE THING THAT makes Bruce Bartlett's column on SALT II (LR, December) into a worthless polemic is his steadfast reluctance to consider any of the issues seriously or accurately.

Granted, the exercise of a civil defense program by the United States is too cumbersome a task to be practical in the face of a strategic attack. This does not mean the effort is entirely worthless, nor does it mean that the Soviets are wasting their time in following such a program. It is quite clear that the Soviets are intending to prepare against the occurrence of nuclear attack—and on such a basis that their society could be reconstituted in the aftermath. We simply do not have this capability. Bartlett seems to think that any exercise by the United States of a civil defense program would provoke the Soviets into an attack. I can only ask: is an attack *less* likely, so long as the Soviet Union perceives the U.S. as being incapable of surviving it?

Bartlett dismisses the point about Soviet military spending by attributing it to the manner in which our intelligence assesses such things. This is very glib; it entirely bypasses the fact that the Soviet Union has fielded altogether new generations of weapons: ICBMs, VTOL fighter aircraft, swing-wing long-range bombers, seeker-killer satellites, etc. Is it enough to add that the U.S. has no comparable capability? I think it makes more sense to evaluate Soviet military spending on the basis of the *hardware* they are producing . . . and on this basis, they are no misers.

In the same paragraph, Bartlett says "the Soviets are paranoid and will never acquiesce to a position of inferiority in strategic arms" . . . and then says "if we can . . . establish a position of parity then we are one step on the road towards mutual arms reduction." Now, if the Soviets are so paranoid as to brook no inferiority, how are we supposed to expect them to abandon their paranoia for as long as it takes for them to accept parity? By definition, the paranoid mentality cannot believe in the concept of parity. This also connects with Bartlett's further statement that "we have to assume rational motivation on the part of the Soviets and deal with them on that basis." Well—what is it? Are the Soviets paranoid or rational? More to the point, do the Soviets have any intention of *honoring* such a piece of paper as SALT II? If we take their regard of SALT I as any example, we see that they lost no time in violating it by deploying the SS-20 missile. These items (coupled with the Soviets' predilection for high-megatonnage warheads) incline me to think that the Soviet Union is basically unwilling to participate in the intended spirit of SALT II (or SALT I).

Bartlett then engages in some drivel about the non-importance of weapons "superiority." It is obvious that nothing can *guarantee* security—that is the whole point of freedom. But it is true that the odds of surviving or "winning" a military conflict can depend on such things as the number of troops fielded and the weapons at their disposal. To say that technology moves so fast as to insure continual obsolescence is to mix metaphorical apples with oranges. The soldier in the field may only have a musket, but a musket in the hand is a damn sight better than an atom bomb on the drawing board. It is true that the lag from concept to manufacture can often be many years, but this does not change the fact that a war will be won by *the weapons in the field.* One needs only examine the history of World War II to form an appreciation of the extreme importance of technological innovation in the battlefield. Had Hitler not screwed around with his priorities, he could well have had weapons that would have re-written history as we know it.

An excellent example of this point, introduced by Bartlett, is the Trident missile. Bartlett sees it giving only a "marginal increase in defense capability" and calls it an ill-afforded luxury. Let's look at the facts. Existing Poseidon-type missiles have a range of about 4500 kilometers, and their launcher-submarines must be on-station at locations not far removed from the coast of Russia. Trident I, on the other hand, is capable of a range of almost 8000 kilometers (and Trident II of a range of about 11,000 kilometers). This means that the Trident submarine fleet may rove nearly all the oceans of the world, expanding their "hiding space" enormously. Inasmuch as the key strategic feature of the SLBM is the difficulty to detect and negate the submarine fleet, Trident most certainly amounts to a vast improvement over the earlier Polaris/Poseidon fleet. $1.5-billion per Trident submarine is a lot of money . . . but more to the point: is it worth it? The amount of money spent on a modest fleet of such submarines is probably comparable to the amount of money lost through bureaucratic idiocy in the health and welfare programs, and is rather a small portion of the total federal budget. Penny-pinching is fine if you want to stop the wasteful use of paper clips, but insufficient weaponry are of no use whatsoever to the function of defense.

Bartlett then goes on to repeat the tired cliche that it doesn't really matter if we have the ability to destroy the Soviet Union ten or twenty times over. It *is* a tired cliche—and totally without substantiation. The U.S. is *not* interested in developing bigger bombs; the real trend has been downward to smaller, more precise weapons. The overkill objection is based on the fact that strategic forces are predicated on the basis that most of them might not reach their target (by virtue of having been blitzed by a nuclear blast). This is on a

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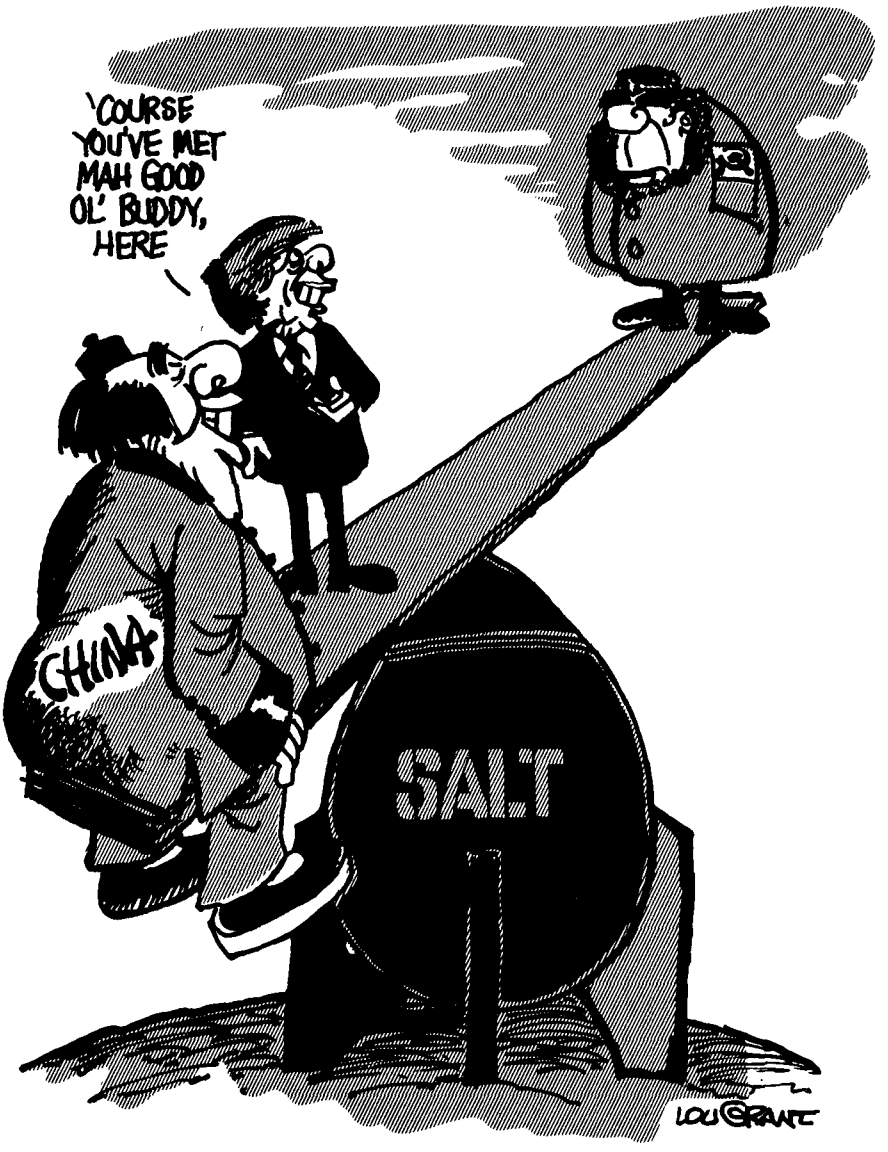
par with the objection that a soldier goes into war equipped with enough ammunition to kill a thousandfold as many enemies. And the answer is the same: just because you have the ability to fire a weapon doesn't mean that you're going to kill anyone with it.

And, at last, Bartlett cops out on the entire issue. Either the Soviets are rational . . . and all this worry is needless—or the Soviets are not . . . and all this worry is fruitless. This is an amazing defense of burying one's head in the sand. It is more realistic to characterize the Soviets as ambitious, ruthless, and realistic . . . and plan our defense strategy accordingly. It is a patent fact that the Soviets accept nuclear warfare as having a place in their military doctrine. The U.S., by contrast, flinches from the very thought. Under these circumstances, and with the Soviet bad faith long in evidence, it is wondrous to me that Bartlett can still look forward to dealing with the Soviets "for our mutual benefit"!

What should one say of SALT II? Simply on the basis of historical evidence, we should oppose it as being another case of the Big Lie. It is a pretend-document, intended to support the fantasy that the Soviet Union is honest and well-meaning . . . and the even greater fantasy that it will somehow prevent or deter the broad military ambitions of either power. It is a worthless treaty, productive of nothing except delusion; and we should call it for what it is: a sham. The American public has long earned the regard of such as P.T. Barnum, who saw the essence of this kind of tomfoolery long ago. Libertarians are almost as bad, preferring to whine about government expenditures without bothering to inform themselves of the details. National defense is a typical issue, and they are convinced that IBM or Sears and Roebuck can fight a war better than the existing military services. This is not to say that the military could not be more effective or less wasteful . . . but there is nothing productive about war, and it is a great mistake to model it after the conduct of a productive enterprise.

As a person professionally engaged in the military-industrial complex, I sincerely hope your writers spend more time in digging up the facts and considering real problems—instead of getting up on soapboxes and spouting off.

MIKE DUNN
Federal Way, Washington



OAKLAND TRIBUNE

Bartlett replies:

Mike Dunn begins his criticism of my attack on President Carter's proposal to increase spending for civil defense in a rather odd way. He says, "Granted, the exercise of a civil defense program by the United States is too cumbersome a task to be practical in the face of a strategic attack."

If civil defense is of no practical value in a strategic attack, it is rather hard for me to imagine what value it does have. Dunn seems to think that the mere act of implementing a civil defense program—no matter how worthless it may otherwise be—would accomplish some kind of foreign policy objective. The only objective I can see is that it will waste many more billions of tax dollars while providing no protection from nuclear attack.

The fact is that if the rockets really started to fly there would be at most 30 minutes from the time they took off to the time they began to land. Anyone who thinks that a city can be evacuated, as the Carter plan presumes, in 30 minutes must never have seen traffic in a normal rush hour. A city the size of Washington probably couldn't be evacuated completely for several days at least, even under emergency conditions. (See Sidney Lens, "Civil Defense: Carter's Idiot Arithmetic," *Inquiry*, January 8 and 22,

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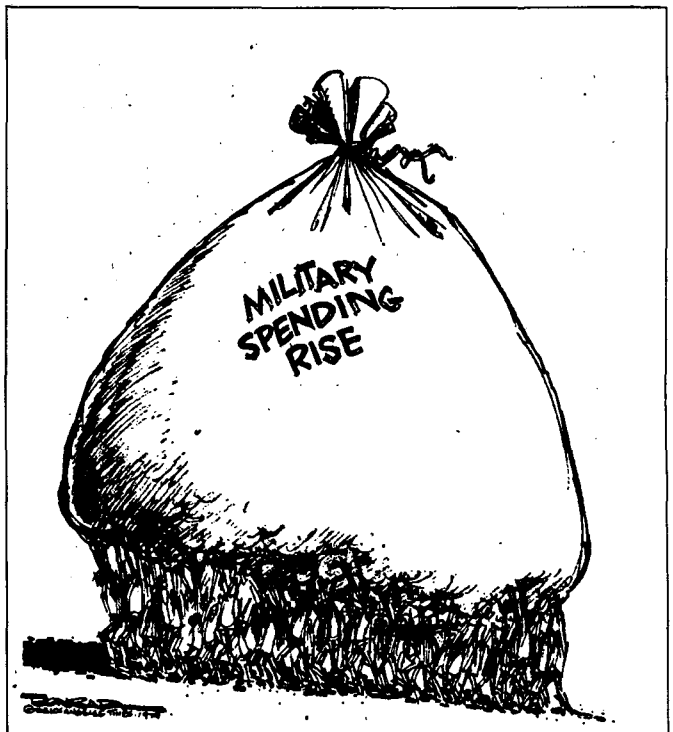
1979.)

Dunn goes on to discuss Soviet military spending without dealing with the issue I raised originally, which is that estimates of Soviet military spending are meaningless. What happens is that we try to observe what the Soviets are doing in the way of military spending and then convert it to dollars by estimating how much it would cost the U.S. to do the same thing. But the Soviet Union has a state-controlled economy and everyone already works for the government. This makes a conversion of Soviet military action into dollars worthless.

What really counts is not whether the U.S. or Soviet Union spends more on defense but what the actual capability of that defense is. From this point of view the U.S. is still far ahead of the Soviets qualitatively. For example, take the much-heralded Soviet Foxbat fighter. For years we were told that this fighter put the best we had to shame. Then one day a defector gave us a Foxbat and we were able to examine it first-hand. All of a sudden we discovered that the Foxbat (or Mig-25) was really quite a backward airplane. While it did have a high top-speed, it had virtually no maneuverability. It was overweight, had relatively little electronic gear, and was not especially well-armed. So much for the Foxbat. (See Congressman Robert Carr's article, "Foxbat Fears and Realities," *The Washington Post,* October 3, 1976.)

Dunn next plays rhetorical games about whether the Soviets are paranoid or not in the strict sense of the term. The point I was trying to raise is that there are more than just two possible relationships between the U.S. and the Soviets regarding military capability (we're ahead of them or they are ahead of us). There is also a third possibility: both sides are relatively equal.

Toward the end of this paragraph Dunn makes another point which is very relevant to this question of whether the Soviets are rational or irrational, paranoid or not. He notes that the Soviets have a "predilection for high-megatonnage warheads." As I have argued elsewhere (LR, March 1978), the fact that the Soviets use high-megaton-



LOS ANGELES TIMES

"BORNE AGAIN"

nage warheads proves that they are primarily interested in defense, not offense. The Soviets must emphasize megatonnage because they don't have the accuracy of U.S. missiles.

If the Soviets really were preparing a first-strike, their aim would be to knock out our missiles, not our cities. This would require a high degree of accuracy, for unless there were close to a direct hit upon a hardened silo the missile could still fire. Thus it would be absurd for the Russians to make a first-strike without being able to take out the vast majority of our missiles in one blow. Otherwise we would simply retaliate. This is why the Soviets have long believed that the U.S.'s emphasis on missile accuracy proves that the U.S. is seeking a first strike capability. Thus the Soviets conclude that since they cannot achieve first-strike they must concentrate on second-strike. High-megatonnage weapons are appropriate for this purpose, since they must assume that by the time they are fired most Soviet missiles will already be destroyed. Those that are left must carry the burden of deterrence. Since, after an American first-strike, all our missiles will be out of their silos, the only deterrent effect the Soviets have is to threaten destruction of our cities with heavy weapons. (See Robert Aldridge, "First Strike: The Pentagon's Secret Strategy," *The Progressive,* May 1978.)

This reply has run too long already so I will just conclude with this observation: Mike Dunn, like most extreme hawks, prefers to believe that the Soviets are always outstripping U.S. defenses, science and technology—no matter how contrary the evidence may be—because it is the only way he can rationalize U.S. militarism and imperialism, which he in turn equates with patriotism.

We forget that the United States was the first nation to use nuclear energy for military purposes (Remember Hiroshima?). Indeed, the United States is the *only* nation ever to use nuclear weapons. How do you suppose this looks to the Soviets?

Nevertheless, throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and even the 1970s it was widely believed that the Soviets were and are advancing far beyond the U.S. in weapons, science and technology. Have we so quickly forgotten the lesson of the so-called space race? From the time the Soviets launched Sputnik to the time the U.S. finally put a man on the moon, everyone—and I do mean virtually everyone—was convinced that the Soviets would win the race. Yet to this day, almost ten years after the American triumph, the Soviets have yet to put a man on the moon. Doesn't this tell us something?

Lastly, I will just say this: The Defense Department deserves closer scrutiny than any other department of government, because the Defense Department has the guns! If, by some chance, a Secretary of H.E.W. decides to take over, there isn't very much he can do. But if a Secretary of Defense or Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff does (*a la* "Seven Days in May"), and invokes "national security" as the justification, then we are in serious trouble.

In a totally realistic sense, I contend that the real threat to our liberty comes from Washington, not Moscow. Let us therefore keep our priorities straight. ❑

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THE PUBLIC TROUGH

Why congress spends

BRUCE BARTLETT

A FEW YEARS ago the U.S. Congress became concerned about the level of federal spending and decided to do something about it. The result was passage of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974. This bill did the following: (1) established the Congressional Budget Office, (2) created House and Senate Budget Committees, (3) introduced a new Congressional budget process, and (4) prevented the president from impounding funds appropriated by Congress.

It was believed that the reason Congress spent so much was because no single committee looked at the budget as a whole. Each congressman, senator and committee looked at legislation individually, without reference to the overall picture of revenues and expenditures. Furthermore, it was believed that Congress could not effectively control the budget without an independent research organization comparable to the Office of Management and Budget. Hence the creation of the Congressional Budget Office, or CBO.

The new congressional budget process mandated that all spending by Congress must conform to limits imposed by the budget resolution passed by Congress shortly after the president sends his budget to Capitol Hill. This resolution supposedly takes into consideration not only the needs of particular programs but the effects of the total budget on the economy.

The first fiscal year in which the budget process was in effect the federal government ran the largest deficit in its history, $66.4-billion (FY 1976). Since then we have had deficits of $45.0-billion (FY 1977), $48.8-billion (FY 1978), and a projected deficit of $37.4-billion in the current fiscal year. Thus the conclusion is inescapable that the budget process has been a dismal failure in controlling spending. In fact, the situation seems to have gotten worse.

Recently, two prominent economists, Professor David Meiselman of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Dr. Paul Craig Roberts of the *Wall Street Journal*, examined the reasons for this failure in a paper called "The Political Economy of the Congressional Budget Office." They argue that because the CBO and the House and Senate Budget Committee staffs (both Republican and Democrat) are all dominated by Keynesians, the budget process has been perverted into a means for increasing spending rather than controlling it. As they write in their paper:

> To us it seems that the new budget process has not changed the incentives that produced the "overspending" (deficits) that led conservatives to support the new process. Rather than increasing the costs on the big spenders, it has reduced them by institutionalizing a crude Keynesianism. The information supplied by the CBO and the Budget Committee staffs supports the spending incentives that already exist. Deficits now emanate from a professional staff as scientific economic policy upon which the nation's level of employment and rate of economic growth depend . . . The Budget Act has put a new appearance on the old process: Things have changed in order that they could remain the same. Deficits are now sanctioned prior to the appropriations process. They have shed their political image. Spending is now under control in the sense that the liberals want. They now have a formal mechanism that sanctions deficits and through which they can lobby for their spending priorities. Conservatives are in a weakened position, because their resistance to deficits can be portrayed as an attack on the budget process or on scientifically derived stabilization policy.

A corollary to the Meiselman-Roberts attack on the budget process is their attack on the use of large-scale econometric models, which are used so heavily by government economists to set national economic policy. Because these models are based almost entirely on Keynesian principles, their forecasts almost always show the following: that savings impair economic performance and growth; that the quantity of money is of no importance at all; that tax cuts are less desirable than increases in spending; and that tax cuts must be geared toward consumption, i.e. toward low-income individuals rather than businesses or middle-class individuals who may save rather than spend. Thus the models will predict uniformly that if taxes and spending are reduced by the same amount it will hurt the economy, and if we do the opposite and raise taxes and spending then the economy will be stimulated. (For a further elaboration see Paul Craig Roberts, "The Breakdown of the Keynesian Model," *The Public Interest*, Summer 1978.)

In frustration with the process I have described, many conservatives and liberals alike have jumped on the balanced-budget amendment bandwagon, as though such a constitutional amendment would finally control the budget as the congressional budget process has not. I have already described why I think such an amendment would be counterproductive (LR, November 1978). I only hope that we do not have to pass such an amendment first before we discover that it too is a misdirected effort to control spending. ❑

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THE MOVEMENT

MILTON MUELLER

ON MARCH 12 the Military Manpower Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee began hearings on resumption of the draft. A parade of witnesses testified that the armed services are not ready for a war in Europe, that the dormant Selective Service System cannot mobilize quickly enough, and that recruitment goals are getting harder and harder to meet. Most concluded that while "we can't get conscription *yet*," some form of compulsory registration is absolutely necessary as a first step.

Six bills have now been submitted to Congress to establish registration and/or conscription and national service.

The testimony against the draft, for the most part, came from religious peace groups. The Congresspersons dutifully listened to them, then dismissed them as unworthy of serious consideration (after noting that they were against all war and "even" opposed a draft during wartime). These moral objections to war and conscription rather bemused them, hard, practical men and women that they were.

But they were not amused by the testimony of one Tom Palmer of Students for a Libertarian Society (SLS).

Palmer pointed out that there was one argument against the draft and registration that they were overlooking: student resistance. "Students just won't stand for it," said Palmer, and promised that any compulsory program would spark a strong student reaction. The elected officials raised their eyebrows at this display of insurbordination. This draft opponent was not amusing at all. The sly committee chair invited Palmer to send copies of all SLS's literature advocating resistance to the Committee's General Counsel "for inclusion in the Congressional Record."

The New Resistance, Students For a Libertarian Society's anti-draft project, had begun.

The next day, March 13, SLS held 20 news conferences to announce a nationwide student anti-draft movement. The conferences were held in most of the major media markets around the county, including Boston, New York, Washington D.C., Atlanta, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. At the conferences, SLS representatives, joined in many cases by groups like the ACLU and the War Resisters League, announced that "if any form of compulsory registration passes, libertarians will defy it and we will urge every young person in the nation to do likewise." "Our object," they said, "is to make

JONNIE GILMAN

Facing reporters at the March 13 news conferences: SLS executive director Milton Mueller . . .

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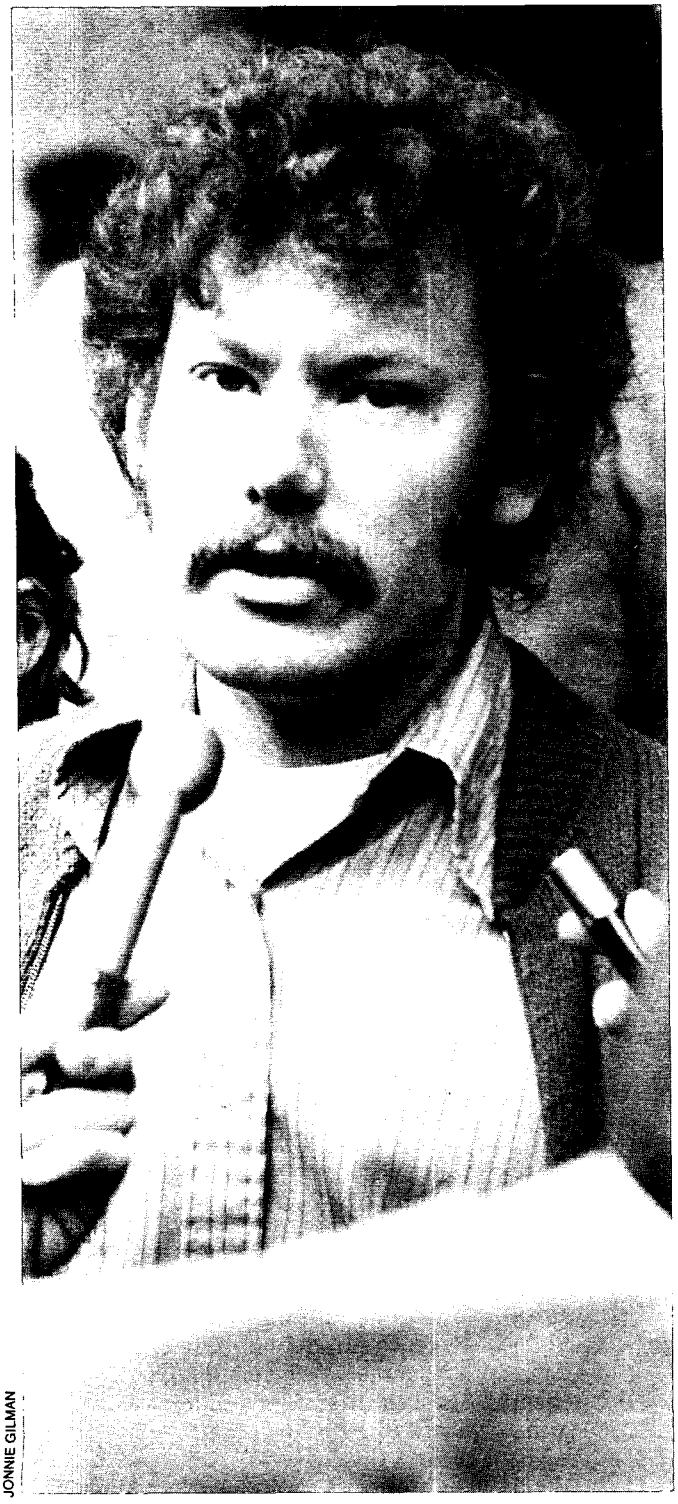
any system of registration break down under the weight of resistance." (The full text of the SLS statement is reprinted on pp. 24-25.)

This statement received excellent coverage around the country. Local TV and radio stations carried the story everywhere. The Washington D.C. conference attracted *Time Magazine*, UPI, and the *Washington Post*, among others. And had Carter's so-called Mideast settlement not occurred when it did, nationwide TV and radio coverage would have been more widespread.

Work on the news conferences was a shot in the arm to libertarian student organizing, transforming SLS into a nationwide student organization virtually overnight. (Until then, SLS had restricted its activities to California). Indeed, despite the intensely evil nature of the draft, its resurrection is probably the best thing that could happen to the movement. What fools they are for bringing it back! Libertarians can now go onto any campus in the country and be assured a favorable reception. Student apathy will vanish in the face of such a clear and present danger. As an issue, the draft ties together civil liberties (registration, privacy, spying) economics (youth unemployment, the war economy, "national service") and foreign policy into a fundamental choice between freedom and state despotism. And for once, it is libertarians who are leading the fight.



JONNIE GILMAN

. . . and Steven Houston of the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors

SLS made two vital strategic decisions when forging its approach to the issue. The first problem confronted was whether a "front group" should be formed that was not explicitly part of SLS in order to gain the widest possible participation, or whether SLS should openly run its anti-draft project as part of a libertarian organization. We chose the latter course.

We were wary of the front group approach, especially because of the lack of carry-over votes resulting from libertarian involvement in the tax revolt. We felt that conscription was such a basic libertarian issue, uniting free market, civil libertarian and foreign policy concerns, that the anti-draft, anti-war movement of the 1980s should be directly and explicitly connected with libertarianism.

This strategy worked—or at least, it has so far. Despite the SLS name, other groups have proved willing to cooperate with us as long as we respect their different approaches. And the press did not cover the event as "Libertarians come out against the draft;" instead, the story was "student anti-draft movement forms, led by a libertarian student organization." This provides an exhilirating contrast to the old days, when libertarians would talk about "getting into" the anti-war movement, or about trying to "influence" the anti-draft movement. At this stage, we *are* the student anti-draft movement.

Another, more controversial strategic decision made by SLS was to link conscription to America's global troop commitments. The burgeoning support for the draft comes amidst a realization by Congress that the constraints of the all Volunteer Force do not square with the requirements of a 2.1-million active duty force level and the maintenance of a capacity to fight in Europe, the Middle East, and Korea. Since neither conservative nor liberal opponents of the draft are willing to question those troop commitments, peacetime registration for a draft increasingly looks like a necessary adjustment to the responsibility of a global empire. It should not surprise libertarians at all—they have been saying for decades that you can't have both freedom and empire—that foreign interventionism magnifies state power and eats away at individual rights.

But for conservatives, and many liberals, the draft represents a crisis of ideology. In the past 30 years, conservatives like Barry Goldwater have been sincere and often heroic opponents of conscription. Yet at the same time they have been staunch defenders of U.S. military might and global troop commitments. What happens now, when a choice between these two predilections is becoming inevitable?

Goldwater, for one, favors compulsory registration, and is more than wil-

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ling to entertain the idea of a peacetime draft. Other prominent conservatives are striving mightily to pretend that they don't have to make the choice. Milton Friedman provides the most dramatic example.

The distinguished economist, who lives in San Francisco, was contacted by SLS to solicit his participation in the Bay Area news conference. He expressed strong support for keeping a volunteer force, yet said he could not attend because he was shortly leaving the country. But he did state that he was writing his next *Newsweek* column against the draft, a fact which provoked SLS to send him its news release and anti-draft statement. The statement, as indicated above, strongly linked the draft to foreign policy, denouncing it as a "necessary tool of interventionism."

Two days after the packet was sent, SLS received a phone call from an angry Professor Friedman. In his conversation with me, Friedman railed against SLS's linkage of the two issues, claiming that such a link would destroy any chance of keeping the all volunteer force. "For God's sake," said Friedman, again and again, "keep the two issues apart." In Friedman's opinion, tying the volunteer force to a particular foreign policy may lead to the loss of the volunteer force. Of course, I believe the opposite view—that unless interventionism is done away with, America will *always* be threatened with conscription and registration.

It is not hard to understand Professor Friedman's real anguish over our approach. To view conscription, not as an isolated act of governmental coercion, but as a logical and ultimately necessary tool of a global military commitment raises fearsome and sweeping questions about radical issues. Conservatives are notorious for confining their criticism of the status quo to areas that fall safely within the boundaries of "respectability." This, of course, is why they are always so ineffective—they shrink from raising basic principles and from demanding meaningful changes. The fact is, any opposition to conscription that fails to support the kind of foreign policy that can make freedom possible is superficial and impotent at best, and a hypocritical evasion of the real issues at worst.

I repeat: as long as our interventionist foreign policy goes unchallenged, the draft will be either a looming threat or a continuing reality. Period. Choose, Professor Friedman.

SLS plans demonstrations against the draft all over the country on May 1st. At least 50 college and high school campuses plan to participate. If interested in working on a demonstration in your area, contact SLS at (415) 781-5817.

Developing libertarians

What is to be done with all those new people attracted by libertarianism but lacking a complete grasp of its principles and traditions? Attracting new people is one thing, but educating and developing them into the kind of individuals who can explain ideas, write the articles, do the research and generally take leadership positions is another matter altogether. The word for this is *cadre:* women and men who possess the wide-ranging knowledge of libertarianism and the commitment to creating a free society that can further the movement.

The Cato Institute has decided to meet this need head-on. Now one year old, their Summer Seminars in Political Economy are the most ambitious attempts yet at full-scale libertarian education.

Of course, other political groups have been doing this for years. The John Birch Society runs zillions of summer camps where it inculcates its own particular brand of paranoia; the Socialist Workers Party has its four or five day training in the tenets of Trotskyism; Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda run camps where students learn that big corporations are responsible for all the world's problems. Yet none of these efforts is as sweeping and systematic as the week-long unfolding of libertarianism sponsored by Cato. In one week, the curriculum covers ethical philosophy, economics, history, domestic policy issues and foreign policy issues—all presented by some of the world's leading libertarian intellectuals. And this vast subject area is preceded by a vast series of readings drawn from the finest works in the libertarian and classical liberal literature. The reading material is included in the price of the seminar; any person who attends will thus suddenly possess the nucleus of a libertarian library. Previous seminars have featured Arthur Ekirch on American history, Roy Childs on property rights, Walter Grinder on Austrian economics, Murray Rothbard and Ed Crane on strategy, and Leonard Liggio on the history of American foreign policy.

As a veteran of one of the original Summer Seminars, I was impressed with the way in which the week was structured. The Seminars are held on college campuses where, for the full week, participants are (relatively) cut off from the outside world and live in simple, albeit comfortable, conditions. The effect of this was to focus our attention on the subject matter and our fellow students allowing us to devote our undivided attention to the drama and excitement of libertarian ideas. Plenty of time was allotted to discussion with the likes of Rothbard, Liggio, *et al*, not to mention other participants, and it was not unusual for these discussions to continue long into the warm summer nights.

The first of these seminars was pretty intense; the instructors were as excited by the ambitious program and the sense that a movement was being born as the young student participants. But it is hard to see how this kind of commitment can be maintained, after the eighth, ninth or tenth Seminar. So Cato is cultivating new scholars and intellectuals to serve as instructors, so that more of the seminars can be run around the country. They are also specializing the programs, conducting special Seminars for businesspeople, history students and journalism students.

Four Seminars will be held during the summer of 1979. The basic Summer Seminar, geared primarily toward students and academics, will be held June 30 through July 8 at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. A "Business and Professional" Seminar will take place at the beautiful Humboldt State University campus in Northern California from August 11 through 19. Then there will be specialized Seminars for history students at the University of Oregon, June 16 through 24, and for journalism students at Northwestern University (in the Chicago area) from July 21 to July 29.

The price for these intellectual orgies is $95 for students, and $350 for everyone else. Some free scholarships are available for those who need them. For an application, contact the Cato Institute, 1700 Montgomery, San Francisco 94111; or call (415) 433-4316. ❑

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LIBERTY'S HERITAGE

Daniel Webster on military conscription

DANIEL WEBSTER's extraordinary eloquence as a public speaker is still remembered more than a hundred years after his death—has, in fact, become a part of American folklore. Stephen Vincent Benet's "The Devil and Daniel Webster," in which the great New Englander outargues and outorates Satan himself, has become a children's classic in the scant half century since its original publication. The historian S. F. Bemis writes of Webster in a recent article in a popular encyclopedia that "no estimate of his eloquence is complete that does not allow for the superb personality that gave it weight and vigor. He was a notable presence,

Daniel Webster: at 22 . . .

even to those who passed him unknown in the street. The dignity of his solid figure, the rich and varied music of his voice, above all the penetrating splendor of his eyes, gave his spoken words a glory that we cannot recover, effective as his speeches are in print."

The problem is precisely that Webster's speeches see print so infrequently. We hear endlessly about his eloquence, but seldom about the *ideas* he so eloquently defended. In more than a few cases, these ideas were strictly libertarian. In others they were more properly describable as constitutionalist. And whenever Webster's libertarian ideals conflicted with the letter of the sacred Constitution which had been foisted upon the American people seven years after his birth in 1782, Webster could be counted upon to side with the Constitution against liberty. As a Senator from New Hampshire in the 1840s, for example, he consistently opposed abolition of slavery—though he regarded slavery, he said, as an abomination—on the grounds that it was recognized in the Constitition and was therefore unabolishable: one could only, Webster believed, make use of every available Constitutional means to inhibit its increase and spread.

Still, Webster could argue like the purest of libertarians when doing so didn't briing him into conflict with the Constitution. One case in point which is particularly relevant to the concerns of the political moment is Webster's speech "On Conscription," which he delivered before the House of Representatives on December 9, 1814. Webster was a Congressman from New Hampshire in that year; his brilliant careers as trial lawyer, historical orator, and statesman (Secretary of State in the Harrison, Tyler and Fillmore administrations; U.S. Senator during the critical decades of the 1840s and 1850s) lay ahead of him. His considerable intellectual and rhetorical energy was more narrowly concentrated in 1814 than it would be in later years—bent almost singlemindedly on ending the (as Webster saw them) useless and destructive hostilities with England: what we know today as the War of 1812. Outraged as Webster was by this war, however, he was doubly outraged by the proposal late in 1814 that the federal government be given the authority to draft soldiers for the fighting. His outrage, his eloquence, and the clarity and consistency of which he was capable as a thinker are all lavishly on display in the following condensation of his famous anti-draft speech (condensation prepared by Murray N. Rothbard):

"This bill indeed is less undisguised in its object, and less direct in its means, than some of the measures pro-

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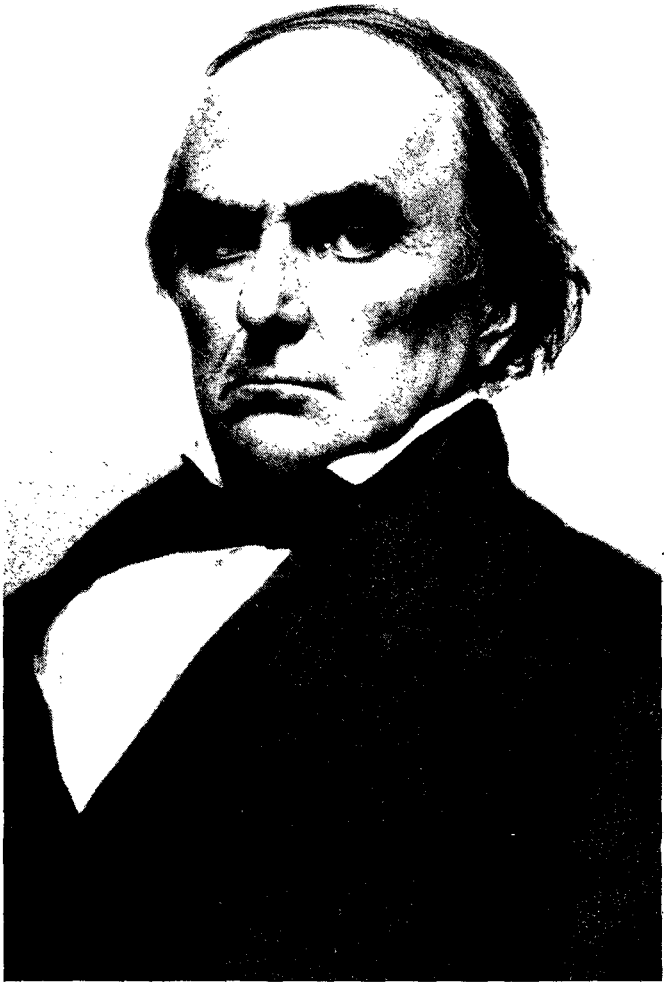
posed. It is an attempt to exercise the power of forcing the free men of this country into the ranks of an army, for the general purposes of war, under color of a military service. It is a distinct system, introduced for new purposes, and not connected with any power, which the Constitution has conferred on Congress.

"But, Sir, there is another consideration. The services of the men to be raised under this act are not limited to those cases in which alone this Government is entitled to the aid of the militia of the States. These cases are particularly stated in the Constitution—'to repel invasion, suppress insurrection, or execute the laws.'

"The question is nothing less, than whether the most essential rights of personal liberty shall be surrendered and despotism embraced in its worst form. When the present generation of men shall be swept away, and that this Government ever existed shall be a matter of history only, I desire that it may then be known, that you have not proceeded in your course unadmonished and unforewarned. Let it then be known, that there were those, who would have stopped you, in the career of your measures, and held you back, as by the skirts of your garments, from the precipice, over which you are plunging, and drawing after you the Government of your Country.

"Conscription is chosen as the most promising instrument, both of overcoming reluctance to the Service, and of subduing the difficulties which arise from the deficiencies of the Exchequer. The administration asserts the right to fill the ranks of the regular army by compulsion. It contends that it may now take one out of every twenty-five men, and any part or the whole of the rest whenever its occasions require. Persons thus taken by force, and put into an army, may be compelled to serve there, during the war, or for life. They may be put on any service, at home or abroad, for defence or for invasion, according to the will and pleasure of Government. This power does not grow out of any invasion of the country, or even out of a state of war. It belongs to Government at all times, in peace as well as in war, and is to be exercised under



. . . and at 70.

all circumstances, according to its mere discretion. This, Sir, is the amount of the principle contended for by the Secretary of War [James Monroe].

"Is this, Sir, consistent with the character of a free Government? Is this civil liberty? Is this the real character of our Constitution? No, Sir, indeed it is not. The Constitution is libelled, foully libelled. The people of this country have not established for themselves such a fabric of despotism. They have not purchased at a vast expense of their own treasure and their own blood a Magna Carta to be slaves. Where is it written in the Constitution, in what article or section is it contained, that you may take children from their parents, and parents from their children, and compel them to fight the battles of any war, in which the folly or the wickedness of Government may engage it? Under what concealment has this power lain hidden, which now for the first time comes forth, with a tremendous and baleful aspect, to trample down and destroy the dearest rights of personal liberty? Sir, I almost disdain to go to quotations and references to prove that such an abominable doctrine has no foundation in the Constitution of the country. It is enough to know that that instrument was intended as the basis of a free Government, and that the power contended for is incompatible with any notion of personal liberty. An attempt to maintain this doctrine upon the provisions of the Constitution is an exercise of perverse ingenuity to extract slavery from the substance of a free Government. It is an attempt to show, by proof and argument, that we ourselves are subjects of despotism, and that we have a right to chains and bondage, firmly secured to us and our children, by the provision of our Government.

"The supporters of the measures before us act on the principle that it their task to raise arbitrary powers, by construction, out of a plain written charter of National Liberty. It is their pleasing duty to free us of the delusion, which we have fondly cherished, that we are the subject of a mild, free and limited Government, and to demonstrate by a regular chain of premises and conclusions, that Government possesses over us a power more tyrannical, more arbitrary, more dangerous, more allied to blood and murder, more full of every form of mischief, more productive of every sort and degree of misery, than has been exercised by any civilized Government in modern times.

"But is is said, that it might happen that any army would not be raised by voluntary enlistment, in which case the power to raise armies would be granted in vain, unless they might be raised by compulsion. If this reasoning could prove anything, it would equally show, that whenever the legitimate powers of the Constitution should be so badly administered as to cease to answer the great ends intended by them, such new powers may be assumed or usurped, as any existing administration may deem expedient. This is a result of his own reasoning, to which the Secretary does

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Remember When?

Sam Blumenfeld, Joel Spring, Diane Divoky
John Holt: Education in Crisis
Earl Ravenal and Murray N. Ro
on The Mideast after Camp
LIBERTARIAN REVIEW

Remember when **The Libertarian Review** subjected the Camp David accords—the underpinnings of the new Mideast peace between Israel and Egypt—to the kind of scrutiny you couldn't find elsewhere? In the October 1978 LR, foreign policy analyst Earl C. Ravenal and economist-historian Murray N. Rothbard made points about the U.S. role in the Mideast which deserve reconsideration in light of the events of March 1979. If you missed the October LR, it's not too late to catch up on this important reading. But the supply of back issues is limited, so act now. Send your check for $1.25 to **LR Back Issues, 1620 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, California 94111.**

not profess to go. But it is a true result. For if it is to be assumed, that all powers were granted, which might by possibility become necessary, and that Government itself is the judge of this possible necessity, then the powers of Government are precisely what it chooses they should be.

"The tyranny of Arbitrary Government consists as much in its means as in its end; and it would be a ridiculous and absurd constitution which should be less cautious to guard against abuses in the one case than in the other. All the means and instruments which a free Government exercises, as well as the ends and objects which it pursues, are to partake of its own essential character, and to be conformed to its genuine spirit. A free Government with arbitrary means to adminster it is a contradiction; a free Government without adequate provision for personal security is an absurdity; a free Government, with an uncontrolled power of military conscription, is a solecism, at once the most ridiculous and abominable that ever entered into the head of man.

"Into the paradise of domestic life you enter, not indeed by temptations and sorceries, but by open force and violence.

"Nor is it, Sir, for the defense of his own house and home, that he who is the subject of military draft is to perform the task allotted to him. You will put him upon a service equally foreign to his interests and abhorrent to his feelings. With his aid you are to push your purposes of conquest. The battles which he is to fight are the battles of invasion; battles which he detests perhaps and abhors, less from the danger and the death that gather over them, and the blood with which they drench the plain, than from the principles in which they have their origin. If, Sir, in this strife he fall—if, while ready to obey every rightful command of Government, he is forced from home against right, not to contend for the defense of his country, but to prosecute a miserable and detestable project of invasion, and in that strife he fall, 'tis murder. It may stalk above the cognizance of human law, but in the sight of Heaven it is murder; and though millions of years may roll away, while his ashes and yours lie mingled together in the earth, the day will yet come, when his spirit and the spirits of his children must be met at the bar of omnipotent justice. May God, in his compassion, shield me from any participation in the enormity of this guilt.

"A military force cannot be raised, in this manner, but by the means of a military force. If administration has found that it can not form an army without conscription, it will find, if it venture on these experiments, that it can not enforce conscription for such purposes. Framed in the spirit of liberty, and in the love of peace, it has not powers which render it able to enforce such laws. The attempt, if we rashly make it, will fail; and having already thrown away our peace, we may thereby throw away our Government.

"I express these sentiments here, Sir, because I shall express them to my constituents. Both they and myself live under a Constitution which teaches us, that 'the doctrine of non-resistance against arbitrary power and oppression, is absurd, slavish, and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind.' With the same earnestness with which I now exhort you to forbear from these measures, I shall exhort them to exercise their unquestionable right of providing for the security of their own liberties." ❑

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The Battle Over CONSCRIPTION

MURRAY N. ROTHBARD

Ever since Richard Nixon cunningly defused the student anti-war rebellion by getting rid of the draft, we have tended to become complacent and to assume that the draft was gone forever. But we forgot some important things. We forgot that the accursed draft machinery—the Selective Service System itself—was still in place, ready to reactivitaté conscription at any time. We forgot that the draft was never defeated with *moral* arguments, but only with the ultimately trivial arguments of my fellow economists. And we forgot that so long as our foreign policy of global intervention and war continued, the pressure for the draft would return and become irresistible.

We must face the fact, once and for all, that the argument of economists against the draft, though correct as far as it goes, is hopelessly narrow and inadequate. Essentially, the argument holds that the federal government has no more need to draft soldiers than to draft typists. The government suffers no shortage of typists because it is willing to pay them the market wage; it has found it difficult to recruit volunteer soldiers because it has paid them far below the wages they could have earned in private life. Therefore, if the government paid market wages for buck privates—as it obviously does, and more, for officers—there would be no problem in maintaining a purely volunteer army.

This mechanistic argument, so typical of the economics profession, fails to meet a number of important contentions by the Pentagon and other boosters of the draft. For example:

(1) The volunteer army isn't working. We need a pool of trained men at the ready to defend Western Europe (or whatever).

(2) We don't want an all-black or an all-poor army. We want an army that reflects a cross-section of America.

(3) America needs an intelligent army; a volunteer army does not recruit educated and intelligent buck privates. Only a draft will force such an army into existence.

These and other arguments cannot adequately be met by parroting the line that all that needs to be done is to raise army pay. For one thing, the taxpayers may well balk at raising the pay sufficiently to bring these aims about. Other goals, such as a trained reserve ready to defend Western Europe at any moment, may simply not be achievable without a draft.

We have to meet the draft head-on. We have to attack and eradicate it because, as economist David Henderson argues in the pages that follow, it is slavery pure and simple, and because slavery is a moral evil; to use slavery in order defend the "free world" is a grisly joke. We have to point out again and again, as libertarian activist Justin Raimondo does, that there would be no call for a draft if we did not have a foreign policy of global intervention, if we did not feel that we needed to send men to fight in every spot on the globe.

For once, libertarians can seize and have seized the opportunity to take the lead in organizing a popular mass movement on behalf of liberty. In the anti-draft movement of a decade ago, we played almost no role. We were far fewer in number, we had no organization in place on or off the campus, and we preferred to sit around quibbling about the prolegomena to the philosophy of the draft rather than plunge into militant anti-draft struggle. But now, happy day, things are very different. We are far greater in number, we have our organization in place ready to seize the moment (see the anti-draft statement of SLS on pp. 24-25), and we have the will to fight against the draft on the campuses and crossroads of this country.

It is ours to take the lead in combating the slavery and murder of conscription. We are going to do so. We are going to lead the nation's youth into a mighty struggle against the draft and against the pro-war foreign policy that sustains it. The powers that be have been smugly congratulating themselves that today's generation of youth is indifferent and apathetic. They shall see how apathetic the New Resistance will be. They shall rue the day they ever provoked it into being. ❑

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CONSCRIPTION: THE NEW RESISTANCE

THE SLS STATEMENT

In the fight against the attempt to revive the draft, one student organization has already jumped to a role of forceful leadership: Students for a Libertarian Society, under the direction of SLS Executive Director and libertarian activist Milton Mueller. Taking the lead in the antidraft struggle, SLS organized and held more than twenty news conferences across the nation on March 13, to announce the formation of their antidraft campaign, which they have called The New Resistance. Nationwide publicity ensued, with SLS's vanguard role mentioned in newspapers, radio and television across the United States, from Boston to Los Angeles, Washington D.C. to San Francisco. *Newsweek* covered SLS as a leading activist force opposed to the draft, and the conservative *U.S. News* singled out SLS and Washington-based SLS representative Tom Palmer for criticism in a prominent editorial discussion of the attempt to revive the draft. SLS has leaped into national prominence by virtue of its leadership of the new antidraft movement, and is now in the process of organizing more than sixty demonstrations against the draft to be held across the nation on May 1. What follows is the text of the SLS Anti-Draft Statement, adopted by the National Board of SLS for release at the March 13 news conferences:

"Once again, the draft threatens young people in this country. Senators and Congressmen discuss our lives and futures as if we were so many head of cattle or pieces of lumber to be allocated at the government's will.

"We are here today to serve notice—to the military, to Congress, to the President—that this organization, in coalition with many others, intends to rise up, organize, and stop the draft before it has a chance to raise its ugly head once again.

"This news conference is part of a series that spans the country. Boston, Washington, New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Austin, Madison, Los Angeles, San Francisco and several other cities are all part of the chain. In each of these cities, leaflets are being distributed, coalitions are being forged and a wide variety of petitions circulated. Many of these petitions carry a pledge not to register if the draft is enacted. Right now, the SLS National Office is in the process of mailing petitions to over 2,000 college activists across the country.

"Not that we expect a flurry of petitions to change the minds of the McCloskeys, Stennises and Nunns in Congress. So from the petitioning and lobbying stage in March we will rapidly accelerate to national demonstrations.

"On May 1st, we are planning a coordinated series of demonstrations at dozens of campuses around the country. More than 50 demonstrations are already planned, and the list will grow as we are contacted by campus groups that want to join in. One demand will be expressed at all these demonstrations: the complete abolition of the remnants of the Selective Service System. We are announcing that we will organize a human blockade of the Washington registration

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office of the SSS if and when registration goes into effect.

"We are very concerned about military registration, because at the moment it is the cheapest and most politically expedient way to ease in to the draft. Such registration supplies the infrastructure making it possible to impose conscription at any time. Worse yet, some of the registration plans under consideration would permit the military to go plowing through school records and the files of government agencies to find 'age and address information.'

"Students for a Libertarian Society (SLS) has no intention of letting draft registration slip in through the back door this way. Registration is where we put our foot down. We will closely watch the progress of bills submitted by Senator Robert Morgan (D-NC) and Charles Bennett (D-FL). While these bills are being considered we will lobby, petition and demonstrate to peacefully register our opposition. But if any form of compulsory registration passes, libertarians will defy it, and we will urge every young person in the nation to do likewise. We have prepared materials to advertise resistance to registration, and we are working with other anti-war and conscientious objector groups who also oppose registration. Our object is to make any registration system break down under the weight of resistance.

"What is Students for a Libertarian Society? SLS is animated by the same kind of libertarian radicalism that sparked the American revolution—that is, we are for individual liberty and against state power. We oppose the power of taxation and economic regulation; we oppose the power of censorship and spying; and we are now focused on the ultimate in state power: war, militarism and conscription. Until recently, SLS largely restricted its activities to California, where we presently have contacts at 50 campuses and high schools. As a product of the federal government, however, the draft must be fought on a national level—a fact that persuaded us to expand outside the congenial political climate of California and go nationwide. Because of this program we have probably tripled the number of our campus contacts around the country, and we expect to hear from many more schools after the publicity generated on May 1.

"Indeed, the spectre of conscription may well bring back the days of student activism. The student community has been rather sleepy and apathetic of late. The end of the Vietnam war and the winding down of the draft seemed to silence the political concerns of young Americans.

"In reality, it was foolish for students to assume that the draft could really be ended without corresponding changes in American foreign policy. Opponents of conscription point out that the U.S. got along fine without a peacetime draft throughout its history until the three decades following World War II. What they don't realize is that the post World War II period was also the only time in American history in which the U.S. has maintained a global military empire, with bases all over the world and military relations with over 100 nations. Today, this global military presence requires an active duty volunteer force of 2.1-million men, and this in turn is supposed to be backed up by about 1-million Selected Reservists and another 750,000 Individual Ready Reservists. Further, in an emergency the Selective Service System is supposed to be able to deliver another 650,000 men within three months. So we are talking about a strategic requirement of more than four million men at a time when the United States is at peace. What is so astounding about this massive standing army is that—according to the estimates of defense analyst Earl Ravenal—only 30 percent of it is directly involved in the defense of our own country. Europe accounts for nearly half of our entire defense budget. Maintaining our capability to fight a land war in Asia claims over $21-billion of the military budget—even after the alleged "lesson" of Vietnam. This is the bottom line—the real justification for renewing the draft that no one dares to mention: the maintenence of a global empire. There is more to the draft than the simple crime of slavery.

"This country is fast approaching a choice of monumental significance. After the failures in Vietnam, Angola and Iran, the Cold War empire is out of equilibrium; it must strengthen itself or be dismantled. It cannot remain as it is. You cannot have troop commitments all over the world without conscription and registration. The steady flow of young bodies cannot be hampered by the niceties of free choice and market wages.

"Yet Congress maintains a deafening silence about America's global role. In the hundreds of pages of Congressional testimony on the draft, not one Representative—either for or against conscription—makes any real effort to justify the global commitments that make an armed service of 2.1-million necessary in peacetime.

"America must be made to face this question. And a movement against the draft can make America face it. We are not going to quibble over the I.Q. scores of enlistees, nor be sidetracked by guilty liberals wringing their hands over the number of blacks joining the army. These are after-the-fact rationalizations. The real crux of the matter is that conscription is a vital part of an interventionist foreign policy. This policy's legacy of inflation, economic distortion, government spying and executive power at home is matched only by the repression, economic manipulation and violence it has spawned overseas. We will fight against conscription not only for the sake of our own lives and freedom, but for the sake of a free, demilitarized economy, for civil liberties and world peace.

"Thus, if the statists plan to ram the draft down our throats once again, they should be warned that the stakes are high. Because if our freedom is to be sacrificed on the debauched altar of Cold War foreign policy, then we are going to change that foreign policy. If our lives are to be disrupted for the sake of NATO's ancient walruses and the dictators of Southeast Asia, then we are going to demonstrate to the American public that those commitments are not worth their price in lost freedoms. The draft is only the initial battleground: what is really at stake is the nature of our society and the role of our country in the world. If we stop the draft cold, if we deny the state this tool of global interventionism, then the army will have to contract in size, and America will have to rethink its role in the world. And perhaps then we can begin to rebuild a peaceful and productive economy, free from the all-consuming cancer of government.

"This is not the time to expound on the intricacies of how we should disengage from Korea, Europe and the Middle East. Suffice it to say that dismantling the empire is neither a utopian pipe-dream nor an old-fashioned refusal to deal with international complexities. On the contrary: it is precisely because the world *is* so complex and unpredictable that we can no longer rely on the simple-minded solution of sending in the marines. An America that renounced the use of force in its dealings with other nations would not be 'isolationist' at all, but truly international, trading freely and maintaining communication with all nations while making alliances with and agressing against none." ❑

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CONSCRIPTION: THE RETURN OF SLAVERY

DAVID HENDERSON

Imagine that you are eighteen years old and are just getting out of high school. You're finally free. Free after twelve years of being told what to do and when to do it. Free from ridicule and punishment for not obeying.

You aren't sure what you'll do now. You've thought about many things. Freedom is a little scary. You're on your own—more than you have been in a long time. Maybe more than you have ever been.

But even though it's scary, it isn't just scary. It's also very exciting. Finally, you can choose. You may make wrong choices. You may make terrible mistakes. But they will be *your* choices and *your* mistakes.

When you get home, there's a letter waiting for you. It looks official. You open it and read it:

"Greetings:

The United States Government orders you to report for military service in two weeks. If you fail to comply with this order, you will be charged with a felony, and will be liable if convicted for a fine and/or a prison sentence."

You stare at the letter and think. Just when you were almost free, this comes along. Just as you were finally about to try your freedom, you're told that you can't. If you try it, you could go to prison.

How could anyone do that? It's as if they don't care what happens to you. They're going to take you and send you wherever they want. They're going to make you do things you don't want to do. If you disobey, they'll punish you worse than you've ever been punished before. It's terrifying, really terrifying. For a few years, you'll be a slave, literally. And they might be your last years.

All of this, of course, is a fantasy. You may not be 18 years old. We don't have a draft. But if certain people get their way, this nightmare will soon be a reality for millions of people.

What kind of people are advocating this return to slavery? Most of them differ from the people who defended slavery 150 years ago. They differ in one major respect: they don't realize that they are calling for slavery.

What are their arguments? What possible argument could justify enslaving young people and possibly killing them? What goal is so important that it justifies taking a few years of an individual's life and possibly that life itself? Let us examine some of their justifications.

Senator John Stennis of Mississippi recently argued that "the military isn't getting enough and the right kind of personnel" and that military leaders have had "a full and fair opportunity to determine if the all-volunteer force will work. It has failed its test and proved not to be the answer for peacetime or wartime needs."

Senator Stennis has the facts wrong. All four branches of the military are within one percent of their authorized levels. This performance is better than during the draft. Also, the mental tests taken by new recruits indicate that their average intelligence was higher in 1977 than in 1964. According to the only other measure of intelligence the military has,

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namely the percentage of recruits who are high school graduates, the intelligence level is almost the same: both in 1964 and 1977, 68 percent of recruits were high-school graduates.

More importantly, even if the military were not up to Congress' standards, it is a complete non sequitur to call for a draft on that basis. The non-sequitur can best be seen with a non-military example: If private firms could not get enough workers, the solution would be straightforward: pay more. If the pay is high enough, a private firm can get all the workers it wants. So also with the military. The military can get all the men or women it wants by setting wages appropriately.

Advocates of the draft reply that it costs less than a volunteer army precisely because the volunteer military has to pay more. But by this standard, the pyramids were actually quite inexpensive, since they were built with slave labor. All they're really saying is that if you shanghai people, you can pay them less than if you were to hire volunteers. People who make this argument are looking at only the budgetary cost of the labor, leaving aside all the actual costs borne by the draftees themselves. If a young draftee was planning to go to college, then the cost of drafting him is not only his military pay. The cost is the value he places on getting an education. If a draftee was planning a career, then the cost of drafting him is not only his pay. The cost is the value of starting his career immediately. The true cost of something is everything given up to get it. The true cost of a drafted military is not the budgetary cost. It's everything the draftees had to give up.

The cost of the volunteer military is actually less than the cost of the draft. The reason is complicated, but worth explaining. Suppose that the military wants to hire one additional soldier. Suppose that it must choose between two high school graduates, A and B. A is still unsure what he wants to do with his life, and so would be willing to try the military for $10,000. B wants to be a doctor and wants to begin building a career immediately. He would have to be paid $20,000 to give it up.

If the military must hire volunteers, it must pay $10,000 to get an additional soldier. It will hire A. B will not join. The cost is $10,000, the value of what A gives up.

If the military can draft people, it can pay less. Say it pays $9,000. It is not sure to get A. It might get B, even though he has the better alternative. The cost of the draft would then be the $9,000 that the government pays plus the implicit tax on B.The implicit tax is what B would have accepted to volunteer—$20,000—minus the $9,000 he *is* paid: in other words, $11,000. The total cost of the draft, therefore, is $20,000. And this exceeds $10,000, the cost of the volunteer method. The draft costs more because it puts the wrong man in uniform.

Some advocates of the draft believe the volunteer military puts an undue defense burden on blacks by hiring them disproportionately. But this in turn ignores the fact that the black people volunteered. They must regard military service as more rewarding than their other opportunities, or they would not have joined. Replacing the volunteer military with the draft would hurt these people, not help them. It would hurt the ones who would then be replaced by whites by removing as a possible choice what had been their best opportunity. It would hurt the ones who remain by removing the pressure on the military to pay decent wages. The draft, not the volunteer military, would put an undue burden on black people.

What can be said about the argument, often put forth,

"The draft is slavery, and *slavery cannot be justified–period.*"

that the volunteer military is more isolated than a conscripted one, and that this threatens our freedom? This argument makes no sense. The threat to our freedom hardly comes from lowly draftees, but rather from high-ranking officers. Since no one has yet advocated drafting them, we would have volunteer officers with or without the draft. Whatever threat exists without a draft would still be there *with* one. Moreover, the military takeovers usually cited by draft advocates were in fact by conscript armies. Napoleon and Franco used conscript armies in their takeovers. More recently, leaders of a conscript army took power in Argentina.

The draft is slavery, pure and simple. Slavery is never justifiable on moral grounds, so its advocates have tried desperately to find other justifications. Even on their own terms, none of those justifications works. But that should surprise no one: if mankind has learned anything over the centuries, it should have learned that *slavery cannot be justified–period.* The real danger we face comes not from an ill-manned military, but rather from the fact that *that conviction* is today absent from the minds of our political leaders. ❑

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CONSCRIPTION: The Means Of Interventionism

JUSTIN RAIMONDO

It could happen any day now.

At any moment the President of the United States could reinstate the draft registration process by Executive Order. And certainly Jimmy Carter's proposal to spend $5-million in an effort to beef up the moribund Selective Service System is an indication of where his real sympathies lie.

There are currently five different bills in Congress which would either revive draft registration, or create a national "youth corps" devoted to "community service" at home, as well as a foreign policy of global interventionism abroad. Yet in recent years, the very foundations of an interventionist foreign policy have been shaken by a tidal wave of popular revolutions directed against U.S.-supported governments, like that of the departed Shah of Iran.

The "geo-politicians" of the Pentagon are in a panic. It is no accident that Defense Secretary Harold Brown declared, in his testimony before the recent Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on draft registration, that the situation in Iran "could require a U.S. response,"—or that Energy Secretary James Schlesinger has uttered veiled threats of American military intervention in the Middle East, if judged "necessary" to secure American access to oil in that troubled region—or that the U.S. Army report on the status of an All-Volunteer Force (AVF) states that "the All-Volunteer system can only be effective in peacetime, and there is justifiable concern about our ability to make a rapid transition to a draft system in emergencies." According to the *Stanford Daily*, "the push for reworking the draft system comes amid studies that show the present system could not turn out enough soldiers quickly *in the event of a European war in which thousands of GI's were killed.*" (emphasis added) The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Report on the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) is so matter-of-fact as to appear absolutely deadpan: "The dismal truth is that the Selective Service System, having deteriorated from an operational status in 1973 to a 'deep-standby' status today, means that it will be seven months after mobilization *before the first draftee can be made ready for shipment overseas.*"

And just where are these hapless souls to be shipped off to? To Europe and NATO, which account for nearly half of our astronomical military budget, and to Asia and the Middle East. And why? To protect our "interests" in Asia and the Pacific, such as propping up the dictatorships in the Philippines and Korea, and to secure access to oil in the Middle East.

In the name of "world stability" we have rushed to assist every clique of "anti-communist" generals and every band of hoodlums desperate enough to accept CIA support, from Angola and Iran to South Vietnam and South Korea. And new links in the ring we have been building around the Soviet Union have recently been re-forged: in the Far East, we are now constructing a new alliance with the People's Republic of China, and in Turkey we are presently negotiating for the reopening of missile bases and intelligence-gathering installations right on the Soviet border.

In the five years since Vietnam, the rulers of the American Empire have discovered that the all-volunteer force is inherently a *peacetime, defense-oriented* army. While perfectly adequate to *defend* the U.S., it is not suited to quick mobilization for foreign wars, and was never designed to maintain the troop level required by dreams of empire.

We are fast approaching a fundamental, historically crucial crossroads. The American Empire is in a state of crisis; after the failure of Vietnam, Iran, Angola, Nicaragua, and elsewhere, the interventionist foreign policy of the past forty years needs desperately to be re-examined and completely discarded.

Nearly thirty years ago, one of the last great figures of the

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anti-imperialist "Old Right," Rep. Howard Buffett, one of Sen Robert A. Taft, Sr.'s strongest allies, declared on the floor of Congress, in the midst of his prescient attack on the then-emerging Turman Doctrine, that "even if were desirable, America is not strong enough to police the world by military force. If that attempt is made, the blessings of liberty will be replaced by coercion and tyranny at home." Buffet, like other members of the Old Right, knew that militarism and an aggressively interventionist foreign policy were anathema to individual liberty at home and abroad, and would only lead to the evils of conscription and the socialization of the American economy, promoting upheavals in the very countries whose "stability" we intended to promote. We have yet to learn that lesson.

Draft resistance in the sixties: opposition to interventionism

The clear intention of the American people when they forced Presidents Nixon and Ford to either end the draft or else face serious political consequences was to put an end not only to the draft but to all intervention in the affairs of other countries. After almost ten years of futile slaughter, the American people could not help but see the crucial connection between conscription and an interventionist foreign policy: it was written in blood across the ravaged face of Vietnam, and indelibly etched into the American conscience, undeniable and unforgettable.

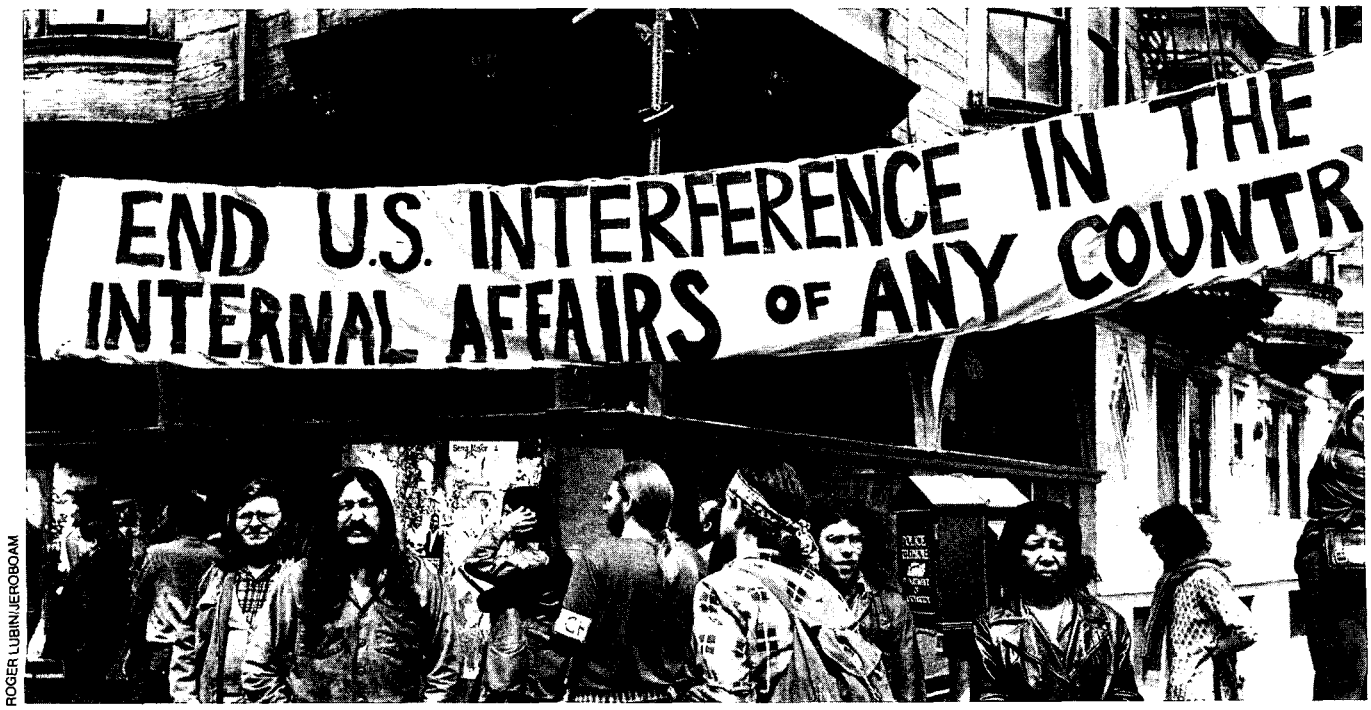
Wars overseas have always meant a concomitant war on the "home front": a war against individual liberty, a war against economic freedom, a war against taxpayers and consumers, and a war on dissent. Authoritarians of both the left and the right have always united on this single issue, each singing different versions of the same old song. On the Right, we have Senator John Stennis and the old warhawk faction, who are trying to convince the American public that the incompetent, top-heavy, ponderous despotism known as the USSR is a threat to U.S. national security. On the Left, we have corporate state "liberals" like Jerry Brown and Pete McCloskey draping their own version of militarism and slavery in the rhetoric of "community service" and do-goodism. The McCloskey proposal, already introduced in the House, would require that:

> . . . each American will enter government service at the age of 18. Each person would be able to choose either a year of military service, followed by four years of college at the government's expense; or choose two years of government labor in hospitals, the forestry service, or agriculture. Each 18-year-old would list a preferred choice, but a lottery system similar to one used in the past drafts would be used to fill the military if necessary. (cited by the *Stanford Daily*, 1/4/79)

As has been noted, this totalitarian boondoggle has been endorsed by none other than the sinister opportunist Jerry Brown, whose unprincipled ride on the anti-government bandwagon ended abruptly when he stated to the press: "The concept of service—not to the 'me' generation or to the 'now' generation—but service to the country and the future is essential. Now we serve the country not just by marching around with a rifle, but by bringing hope back to the cities, by comforting the sick, by renewing the forests and the rivers and by bringing friendships to other countries." (*L.A. Times*, 2/28/79)

The sanctimonoius drivel spouted by Jerry Brown and McCloskey is matched only by the ugly reality of racist fear and cultural Neanderthalism exhibited in a pro-draft article by Congressman Robin Beard in a recent issue of *The National Guardsman*. If the draft isn't resumed, Beard wrote, "readiness will continue to decline, and then stabilize at a dangerously low level in Reserve forces. Costs will continue to dictate all major decisions. Force composition will include more women, more blacks and a continuing growth of lower mental category personnel." (8/23/78)

This is the real nightmare that haunts the Statist's dreams: the spectre of an army which could not be trusted to enact the interventionist scenario. When Pete McCloskey cites a 44 percent minority group casualty rate in Vietnam as a *justification* for the draft, he is simply projecting his own racism onto the other side. What possible objection is there



ROGER LUBIN/JEROBOAM

"The clear intention of the American people when they forced Presidents Nixon and Ford to end the draft was to put an end to all intervention in the affairs of other countries."

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to a primarily non-white Army—except the fact that such an army would be less willing to fight needless wars in Africa or Asia? Racism and fear hang over the new advocates of conscription like a thick fog—what else but a "national youth service corps" will control and contain the 40 percent of black teenagers who are currently unemployed?

The "liberal" dream of domestic socialism and the right-wing dream of an international American Empire have met and merged. With Jerry Brown on the left, and people like Senator Sam Nunn (D-GA) on the "anti-communist" Right, it is only a question of time before the draft comes back.

The draft reappears on Capitol Hill

In fact, this attempt to militarize American youth into a kind of Hitler Youth Corps run by and for the Welfare/Warfare State has already been introduced into both houses of Congress (S-1240 in the Senate, HR-6128 in the House, both supported by President Carter). According to the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors:

> The major provisions of these two bills (identical as introduced) are 1) the creation of a National Young Adult Conservation Corps to hire [sic] youth aged 16-24 for year-round work on conservation projects; 2) authorization for Youth Community Conservation and Improvement Projects for youth 16-19 which involve jobs in urban and rural areas, improving neighborhoods, and restoring natural resources on publicly-owned land; and 3) comprehensive youth employment and training programs to provide jobs for disadvantaged and low-income youth aged 16-19 under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) . . . .

But the military motives behind all the ritualistic invocations of "neighborhood improvement" and "jobs for the disadvantaged" cannot be denied. According to an article in the *Army Times*,

> The armed services will take a more active role in the management of Youth Conservation Corps and similar programs, according to the Secretary of Defense. The YCC and the proposed new National YCC are modelled on the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps that was managed by the Army. . . . Defense Secretary Harold Brown has notified the service secretaries that there have been more suggestions within the administration that Defense take "a more active role in the management of the program." (5/9/77)

Thus, we find old "anti-war" liberals like Pete McCloskey—who actually ran in the 1972 primaries against Nixon and the Vietnam War—serving as a left-wing cover for today's militarists. The liberal "doves" of yesteryear—whose opposition to interventionism never extended to the sphere of economics, always being artificially limited to the sphere of foreign policy—have come full circle. They have nothing left to betray. To advocate conscription in the name of "anti-communism" at least has a kind of paranoic logic to it; to advocate universal slavery in order to eliminate unemployment, in the name of the "disadvantaged," is blatant evil. To make everyone equally disadvantaged—instead of eliminating the disadvantages—is like "solving" the problem of an epidemic by *infecting everyone with the disease*. This is egalitarianism revealed as bankrupt.

This coalition of "liberal" statists and right-wing militarists has already started the drive to reinstitute draft registration. The full weight of all government agencies and institututions, the full power of the huge bureaucracy spawned by the parasitic growth of the "public sector" from welfare agencies to the educational establishment, will be brought to bear in a national campaign to identify and classify all individuals between the ages of 18 and 26, if Democratic Senator Robert Morgan of North Carolina has his way. His bill (S-226) introduced in late January, provides "for access by the Selective Service System to age and address information in the records of any school, any agency of the United States, or any agency or political subdivision of any State, for the purposes of conducting registration . . . ." SB-226 simply clarifies what has always been true: that the State is in full control of its own institutions. They have your name and your number. In fact, they have had access to whatever information is required for their purposes for a very long time. Of course school authorities will cooperate fully with a newly-revived Selective Service System.

The fact that this legislation has a good chance of passing is a tragic commentary on the state of basic civil liberties in this country. We are living in frightening times, an era of fundamental choices between polar opposites. The choice is between the free market, a civilian economy, basic civil liberties, and a noninterventionist foreign policy *versus* a socialized economy of conscripted labor and military contracts, a government that registers, classifies and spies on its citizens, and a foreign policy of international militarism which harkens back to mercantilism.

If we choose the first option, we must reverse the entire direction and spirit of authority run amok and roll back the State on every level, realizing consciously and fully that only the existence of the leviathan State made S-226 possible—and that only a new spirit of libertarianism can make such things *im*possible.

Libertarians across the nation should work together to build a national resistance movement before the nature and style of the new draft is finalized. We must build a nationwide movement dedicated to opposing our foreign policy of global interventionism, and the threats to individual liberty which stem from that foreign policy. We must resist the draft totally, without compromise and without hesitation. And if liberals and conservatives alike join hands in this quest for a new despotism fastened upon the youth of America, we must take the lead in opposing both them and their bastard offspring. We must stand firm, and state resolutely: *This* shall not pass. ❑

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Tax Revolt 1979: Interviews with Frank McNulty and Howard Jarvis Plus: "Nuclear Energy: A Foreword on Three Mile Island"

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"MENTAL ILLNESS" & POLICE BRUTALITY

THOMAS SZASZ

Despite intense Western scrutiny of Russian psychiatric "abuses," critics of Soviet psychiatry have been unable to turn up a single case in which Russian psychiatrists have "hospitalized" and "treated" someone who, in the hospitalizing psychiatrist's own opinion, was not mentally ill and did not need psychiatric treatment. However, precisely such a case exists now in the United States.

The case is that of Robert H. Torsney, a white policeman in New York, who on Thanksgiving Day in 1976 shot and killed a 15-year-old black youth in Brooklyn. After being acquitted of the manslaughter charge on a plea of insanity, Torsney was committed, as required by law, to the custody of the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene. According to the legal-psychiatric fiction that was henceforth to govern his fate, he was confined in order to be observed, examined, and if necessary treated—not in order to be punished. He was, after all, "not guilty" of any crime. In due course, again as required by law, the Department of Mental Hygiene reported back to the committing court about the "patient's" status. The report, based on observing Torsney for about a year, was that he was not mentally ill, was not a danger to himself or others, and should therefore be released forthwith. Justice Leonard Yoswein, the New York State Supreme Court judge in Brooklyn who had to rule on the case, held nine days of hearings, during which eighteen psychiatrists testified. All the expert witnesses agreed that "Officer Torsney was not psychotic and was not a danger to himself or others." In the decision he handed down, Judge Yoswein noted that "evidence also indicates that the patient was not suffering from mental illness during the entire period that the patient has been in the custody of Mental Hygiene . . . Mr. Torsney was not insane at any time during his commital." Accordingly, Judge Yoswein ordered Torney released.

Predictably, this judicial decision led to an outcry in the black community in Brooklyn. It also led to what the New York *Times* characterized as "a rare appeal by the District Attorney's office of the lower court's finding in an insanity-defense case." Predictably, the appeal was successful. On February 6, 1979, the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court reversed Justice Yoswein's ruling. In a unanimous, 20-page decision, the five-judge panel ordered that Torsney's commitment be continued. "We may not shirk our responsibility to the community by prematurely releasing Mr. Torsney while he continues to suffer from a dangerous personality disorder," the panel said. The appeals court also justified continuing Torsney's psychiatric confinement and "treatment" by noting that "he might face continued stress from a departmental hearing, possible suits, financial stress, and threats."

In an editorial remark on these goings-on, the New York *Times* (February 11) laconically observed that "Freedom [is] fleeting for Officer Torsney." In the same issue of the

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Times, in a story about Pakistan's recent turn to Islamic laws, we learned that in the case of two Pakistanis sentenced to have their hands chopped off, the sentence could not be carried out because "the military courts have been unable to find a surgeon willing to perform the operation." It is surely worth noting that American courts never encounter any difficulty having their sentences carried out by psychiatric executioners—as the case of Robert Torsney dramatically illustrates.

Consider the brutal facts—and the psychiatric fictions—in this case. After observing and examining Torsney for more than a year, psychiatrists in the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene—at all levels, from those directly in charge of the case to those in the highest ranks of the bureaucracy—have declared that Torsney is not mentally ill, is not dangerous to himself or others, requires no psychiatric treatment, and should therefore be released from psychiatric "hospitalization." In this ostensibly medical judgment, the psychiatric experts have been overruled by a group of laymen, called judges. Despite the Mental Hygiene Department's own determination that Torsney is not mentally ill and should be released, the courts—and the Department—have evidently had no trouble finding psychiatrists to imprison and "treat" Torsney. In my opinion, these facts make this a more obvious and more convincingly demonstrated case of psychiatric abuse than any of those reported from the Soviet Union.

Of course, Torsney should never have been acquitted as insane. No one should be. The "psychomotor epilepsy" allegedly causing him to kill his victim was pure psychiatric fiction. No neurologist testified in the case. Actually, neurologists do not believe that epilepsy (real or pretended) causes crime. Only psychiatrists believe that. And even psychiatrists believe it only when it suits their purpose. When, at the Appeals Court hearing, Alfred B. Annenberg, the attorney representing the New York State Mental Hygiene Department, was chided by the justices for insisting that Torsney was sane despite having been acquitted as insane, Annenberg, probably quite unwittingly, tore the mask off the official face of institional psychiatry. "Your Honor," he reminded the court, "the Department of Mental Hygiene bears no responsibility for what happened at the trial—miscarriage of justice or whatever. . . . No one could find one violent act in this man's life except for two seconds killing Randolph Evans." Unrelenting in their quest for a diagnosis of insanity, the judges badgered Annenberg, asserting that Torsney "suffered from a rare form of epilepsy." Evidently losing his cool, Annenberg shot back that, had he been at the trial, "I would have had four experts to testify there's no such thing."

Of course, Torsney should not have been, and should not continue to be, imprisoned in a mental hospital. No one should be. The game Torsney, the psychiatrists, the lawyers, and the courts have played lays bare the evil inherent in psychiatric justice—namely, the principle that two wrongs make a right. The insanity acquittal was—and always is—a grave wrong. Imprisonment in the insane asylum was—and always is—another grave wrong. These two wrongs add up to a practical right. A crime has been explained, excused, and avenged. Who could ask for more?

Pathetically, Department of Mental Hygiene psychiatrists—trying, for a change, to be honest—claim to be unable to "find" any mental illness in a "killer" like Torsney. Piously, State Supreme Appeals Court judges—trying, as usual, to cater to the public passions which they think is justice—remind them of their duty to find it. Voltaire is reputed to have said that if there were no God, we would have to invent Him. Obviously, if there were no mental illness, we would have to invent it. *Le plus ça change, le plus c'est la même chose.* ❑

Thomas Szasz is professor of psychiatry at the State University of New York's Upstate Medical Center at Syracuse. His many books include *The Myth of Mental Illness, Ceremonial Chemistry, Heresies,* and *The Theology of Medicine*. He contributes frequently to LR.

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DRACULA Leaves His Castle

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

Like a spider coming out from a crack in the rocks, Richard Milhous Nixon has emerged from his San Clemente exile to discover if he still has an important place in the world. Considering that no American in modern times has had such universal public obloquy dumped on him, it is astonishing that this man who has come to be regarded as Benedict Arnold II by millions of his fellow citizens has the brass to show his face. But if the Swooped-Nosed One is anything, he's tough.

That he is alive is proof enough of that. Only someone who was in America at the time of his downfall can appreciate the volume, the fervor and ubiquitousness of the invective aimed at the man. At the height of the Cold War, Joseph Stalin got more sympathetic treatment in the American press. Such a rage was probably necessary in order to carry out the regicide, but watching it was, nevertheless, like looking at a political equivalent of stoning a man to death, an American version of those weird

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Chinese wall poster campaigns. Alone, without a single supporter fighting for him in public—excepting only an obscure retired rabbi from Fall River, Massachusetts, who had formed an ineffectual committee on his behalf—Richard Nixon almost went under and died of phlebitis. Only the toughness, which had brought him back from earlier and lesser political extinctions, pulled him through.

How tough the man America loves to hate actually can be is illustrated by a story told by H. R. (Bob) Haldeman, who was until recently serving a term in prison for his part in *l'affaire Watergate*. Shortly before Nixon's old grand vizier was to report for prison duty, the world's most famous used car salesman called up his former aide from San Clemente and inquired how Haldeman was planning to vote in a forthcoming California election. "Boss," the quondam German shepherd quotes himself as saying, "in case you've forgotten, I am a convicted felon and therefore can't legally cast a vote." To this there was an extended pause which Haldeman heard while the master of San Clemente considered what to say, after which Haldeman heard the voice at the other end of the wire reply, "Well, in that case, I'll just have to vote twice."

In the last few months Mr. Nixon has been sallying forth with increasing frequency. He might have been seen flitting about even more, had places like Australia not given him to understand that, while they wouldn't exactly refuse him entrance, they'd just as soon he'd go and create a problem for some other foreign government. The reason this iguana-man has been stirring and going about scaring children is probably owing to a severe case of cabin fever or perhaps a desire to do a little self-rehabilitation—if only by way of trying to play the role of a somewhat tarnished elder statesman. Of course, this activity has given rise to the suspicion that Vampire Numero Uno is about to take wing again and try to stage a political comeback.

Nothing would be more impossible for Richard Nixon, as those with a less fervidly moral view of why he fell from power can appreciate. There is no political base for him, not so much because of the ill-defined and not-so-always easy to see "Watergate cover-up," but because of the hatred borne for him by the American conservative right, the very groups who would not defend him as he started to go down in late 1973 and 1974. The author of detente, the architect of SALT and the man who recognized Red China, as it is invariably called in those circles, can't return from San Clemente like Napoleon from Elba to draw his scattered legions to him for yet another campaign. Mr. Nixon has no legions, since in the eyes of his sometime supporters he is also the person who masked the surrender in Vietnam ("the first war we ever lost") with the mendacious slogan of Peace with Honor.

Although Richard Nixon should be recognized as the man who made the near-heroic attempt to change American foreign policy as it had become fossilized in the late Forties, he gets no credit from the liberals and more benign centrists who had been advocating just such a shift in direction long before he came to the Presidency. There is something so persistently unlikable about the man that in his unique case it is not true that my enemies' enemies are my friends. His enemies' enemies remained his enemies, so that the longer his presidency lasted the fewer supporters he had.

Had Richard Nixon been able to attract the political help of those who believed in his foreign policies, it is unlikely he would have been driven from office. The Watergate episode itself would then have been defined as the second-rate burglary attempt the White House once called it, as the smudgy kind of river ward politics Nixon sometimes indulged in, as a bad mark but not an impeachable offence.

Since Nixon's enemies couldn't stomach him, even when he was doing what they wished and as they wished, they chose instead to give the credit to Henry Kissinger. Kissinger, who had been a feral war hawk and cold warrior until Nixon summoned him to be the executor, not the maker of foreign policy, was lionized as the innovator he was not. Yet as soon as the Trickster was defenestrated, Kissinger began to revert to type and abandon detente, a word he and Jerry Ford banished in the 1976 campaign. He is now the familiar pre-Nixon Herr Kriegs Doktor championing a policy of utmost bellicosity whilst Jimmy Carter is having his trouble even holding to his scaled-down and diminished version of Nixon's foreign policy directions.

Throughout his White House years Richard Nixon repeatedly insisted he was working for a stabilized, tension-free system of world peace. It was a system which depended on playing China off against Russia and on giving the bureaucratic hierarchs of the Kommissariat a debatably large measure of approval and approbation. Thus what he was doing was open to attack as dangerous balance-of-power politics as well as being founded on an almost anti-democratic social vision, but even this was well past what many in the United States were prepared to do. So even a partial rehabilitation will elude him because a fairer picture of him and his administration can't be drawn without giving credit for his work in international affairs.

Just as he will have to wait, perhaps into the next life, for his portion of justice in diplomacy, no fair assessment of Nixon as a domestic politician is in immediate prospect. His natural base, the conservatives, remember him as the price control president, as a New Dealer in Republican raiment. The old time New Dealers, the Democrats, the trade union liberals and the like will go to their graves refusing to admit that whether it was low interest rates and easy money or price controls, their ancient enemy was he who served them best. For them he will always be the Milhous around America's neck.

Although in the economic sphere the Nixon administration failed in ways that the Carter Administration sometimes appears to be emulating, Nixon's efforts at reorganizing the federal government and taming its bureaucracy by putting it under the presidential power is worthy of far more sympathetic treatment that it has received up till now. What is generally dismissed as RMN's unconstitutional attempt to take power that didn't belong to the office may someday be viewed by historians as a courageous effort by a president to hold and expand the powers of the office at least to the point that its occupant could hope to administer the executive branch of government. In this he failed, but so alarmed the bureaucracy that they leaked the smarmy details of his tax-chiseling and expense account cheating—the ignoble minor peculations which did far more than the Watergate coverup to undermine his popularity.

Unlovable, unpleasant, uncharming, ungracious, and unconquerable, it will be a long time yet before a balanced portrait of this man will be drawn. In the meantime, he is fated to play a political Count Dracula, taking flight from time to time on his dark, bat-winged cape to visit England and elsewhere, ever thirsting for the thick, red liquor of approval. At home, naturally, they're waiting to drive a stake through his heart before he runs for office again. ❑

Nicholas von Hoffman, nationally syndicated columnist and commentator, is a contributing editor of *Inquiry*. The present article is reprinted by permission from *The Spectator*.

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BOOKS AND THE ARTS

"Mr. X" reconsiders

CHRISTOPHER WEBER

The Cloud of Danger: Current Realities of American Foreign Policy *by George F. Kennan. Atlantic-Little, Brown, 234 pp., $8.95.*

WE'RE ALL AWARE of the debate, both within the nation at large and among libertarians as well, about, simply, the Russians; about what sort of threat they pose to us, and what we should do in response to that threat. Boiled down to its essentials, the debate is between those who support a continuation—or increase—of American global intervention and our formidable military posture against a supposed Soviet threat, and those who favor a policy of disengagement of American forces from most foreign commitments.

This second view translates into that policy of non-interventionism which roughly characterized the American state *vis-a-vis* foreign lands before the Second World War, only without the periodic crusades—from Mexico in 1846 to Europe in 1917—which the American government so often undertook. There are few people, of course, holding either of the most extreme positions in this debate, few who would support either an outright nuclear attack on "World Communism" or, on the other end, an immediate and complete dismantling of the American military machine. But almost everyone has opinions on where our foreign policy in this regard ought to be going, and these opinions are in turn usually based on whether or not the Soviet Union is perceived as a threat to American security.

Into this debate now enters George F. Kennan, surely no unexperienced voice in American foreign policy. Mr. Kennan entered our Foreign Service over half a century ago, in 1927. He was, in 1932, the first diplomat we sent to Soviet Russia; his years of service culminated with his Ambassadorship there during the Korean War. He was interned by Hitler when in administrative command of our Embassy in Berlin after war was declared in 1941. He emerged from retirement during the Kennedy years to be our Ambassador to Yugoslavia. But doubtless his most influential role was as Mr. X, when he authored an unsigned article in *Foreign Affairs* in July 1947, raising the spectre of a Soviet threat and formulating, for the first time in public print, that policy of "containment" of Soviet power which became the American strategy of the Cold War.

Mr. X., however, has reconsidered. This process has spanned many years, and has now been given full voice in *The Cloud of Danger*. In this, Mr. Kennan's most recent book, he attempts, for the first time "to pull together various views and distill out of them something resembling a grand design of American foreign policy." As a word of warning before we begin, if any of his views seem utopian, particularly in regard to the Soviet Union, glance back over the man's professional history and realize that he cannot be a "spring chicken" where totalitarian governments are concerned.

Mr. Kennan's objective is, briefly, "the reduction of (our) external commitment to the indispensable minimum". He has two main arguments for this unusual—and unpopular—position. One is that by pruning our unnecessary involvements we can better hope to deal with those relatively few important ones, such as reassuring the West Europeans—the closest friends Kennan says we have—that they will be safe from Soviet attack, even if this means our increased conventional military support there. (Here, the question of whether there is or is not a Soviet threat is beside the point. The Europeans, Kennan says, believe there is. This is a deepseated and unshakeable belief, "and they are not to be brought away from it.")

His second argument is more intriguing. One might even call it "Austrian", or Hayekian. Friedrich von Hayek has shown that government attempts to control or regulate the domestic economy are doomed to failure because, simply, there is too much that government cannot know. Information on prices, supply, and consumer wants is constantly shifting. And anyway there are too many possibilities: millions of consumers make billions of economic choices each day, every one of which affects the economy, but few of which are ever measured, or ever could be.

Likewise, Kennan says, in this highly unstable and rapidly changing world, situations are so complex that it is impossible to even know much about them, much less control them. A prime example of this is the recent occurence in Iran. The whole idea of militarily shoring up a regime friendly to us but despotic to its citizens was supposed to both provide a bulwark against a feared Soviet expansion and assure American access to oil. But our American "intelligence" forces apparently did not observe the people's seething resentment against the Shah, and as late as last December our Ambassador Sullivan dismissed anti-Shah protests as the work of a few students "with nothing better to do." Our billions of dollars of weapons and technology are now in hands the American government would probably never have placed them in. Further, oil exports to America are certain to be, at the very least, greatly curtailed. We must look at this terribly expensive interventionist adventure and ask "What did it bring us?" The point is that we cannot predict the full

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consequences of our government's actions in foreign affairs. Indeed, we can rarely be sure of the consequences of its actions here at home, involving a people and a situation much closer to our knowledge.

Kennan's book is divided into chapters the way the globe is divided into regions. First to come under analysis is Latin America, an area Kennan finds anti-American due to the years of condescension and even the plain "burden of our [the American government's] presence".

"Many years ago," he writes,

> returning from a journey through certain of the countries of South America, I pleaded with the State Department to urge our representatives there to relax—leave them alone. I have seen no reason to depart from the view then stated. Beyond the questions of Panama and Cuba, and of the security generally of Central America, we have no really vital interests in that part of the world. Let us be generous in small things, courteous in all circumstances, and helpful whenever we can be, but beyond that let us not be greatly concerned for their opinion of us, and happy enough not to be an active factor in their affairs. The rest, surely, will look after itself.

The situation in Southern Africa, especially in South Africa itself, is extraordinarily complex. We cannot be sure what sort of government will emerge as a successor to the blatantly dictatorial white minority one now in control. So why, asks Kennan, should we "take any position at all . . . Here, again, we do not have the answers."

Again, with Israel:

> Many of us can think, I am sure, of concessions which . . . it would be wise for the Israelis to make; but for the United States government to take the responsibility of urging them to make such concessions is quite another matter. There are many who think, for example, that it would be wise for them to give up the Golan Heights. They may of course be right. But how can we be sure? What would our responsibility be if we urged this upon them and it turned out to be disasterous? It is the same problem, in principle, that we [face] with the South Africans and Rhodesians.

This is simple realism.

American involvement in other areas of the mid-East bears heavily upon that most dangerous of all our foreign policy questions, that of the Soviet Union. From 1970 to 1973 American sales of arms (through the Pentagon) to Iran came to $1.28-billion (itself no small figure). During the following four year period (1973-1976) these sales increased ten-fold, to $11-billion. "To get an idea of the effect of this upon the Russians," Kennan writes,

> let us first recall that Iran is a border neighbor of the Soviet Union; and then let us imagine that the Soviet Union had first, in the early 1970s, inaugurated heavy arms sales to Mexico, and had then, in the middle of this decade, suddenly upped these sales by a factor of nearly 1000 percent and accompanied them, as we have actually done, by the dispatch of hundreds if not thousands of military technicians and advisors. Would the American government and opinion have remained complacent and uninterested in the face of such behavior? And could we not have drawn our conclusions from it?

George Kennan

It could be said in response to this that we all know we Americans intend to use those weapons only if the Soviets attack. And further, it could be said, look at the size of the *Soviet* military machine, look at *their* capabilities. We of course can't be certain of their intentions; they are too hard to determine. So we must assume (the argument would continue) that the Russians will do anything to us that their capabilities permit them to do. To this, Kennan answers, "[should we] take into account only their *capabilities*, disregarding their *intentions*, but expect them to take account only of our supposed *intentions*, disregarding our *capabilities*? . . . If we are going to disregard everything but their capabilities, we cannot simultaneously expect them to disregard everything but our intentions."

Further, "The Russians would have to ask themselves not what *we* would do with an enormous assemblage of (Iranian) weaponry, but what the Iranians, in association with us or others, might do with it." And Iran is not the only country in this region having received U.S. weapons. "During these same four years (1973-76) [that Iran received $11-billions worth] Saudi Arabia bought $8-billion worth."

In several unconsciously prophetic paragraphs (the book was written in early 1977), Kennan states that many people will defend these massive arms sales "on the grounds that we need to [help] the more moderate of the Arab countries—that this, in fact, is a service to the Israelis insofar that it increases the influence of the moderate Arabs at the expense of the extremists." Kennan replies that while he sees the advantage in encouraging these nations to take an interest in a "peaceful settlement" to the Arab-Israeli problem, he doubts whether arms sales are the best way to do this. For while we know who we originally sold the arms to, "one can never be entirely sure in whose hands they are going to end up. Arms some-

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times have longer lives than the individuals into whose hands they were initially entrusted." He further wonders whether these arms sales will even help Israel, for "arms, extravagantly given, have a way of wandering from one country to another." And now of course, as this review is being written, the new ruler of Iran has just turned over the ransacked Israeli Embassy in Tehran to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In the huge area East of Iran—India, South and Southeast Asia, the Phillipines and Indonesia— an area which contains one-quarter of the earth's population, Kennan sees "no vital interests of the United States anywhere . . . no reason why our involvement [there] should go beyond that level of correct and disinterested relations, diplomatic and commercial, which was traditional to our dealings with distant countries before *the madness of universal involvement overtook us in this postwar period.*" (emphasis added) He continually makes it clear that "this does not preclude the activity of private American interests, [but, rather] political involvement". He advises a relationship "on which our government accepts responsibility for the correctness and generosity of its own behavior, but accepts no such responsibility for theirs".

Particularly, Mr. Kennan addresses the question of our two bases on the Philippines—Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Base. There is no justification anymore for these bases. We are no longer involved in Southeast Asia. Communist China is no longer seen as an enemy, to put it mildy. Our military presence on Taiwan is winding down. And Philippine President Marcos, in many ways an outright dictator, stridently called, a few years back, for our withdrawal, or, failing that, the payment of outright tribute to him in order to keep us there. Kennan sees no reason "why the bases should not be removed at once", because they no longer serve their original purpose, and because the Filipinos themselves no longer see them as contributing to their defense. It is an unsavory and indeed humiliating practice for the United States to bribe the leaders of foreign states in order to keep military facilities there that they don't particularly want.

> The American response to the situation that now exists should be, surely, the immediate, complete, resolute, and wordless withdrawal of the facilities and equipment they contain, leaving to the Philippine government the real estate, and only that. We can find a very useful precedent for what needs to be done in recalling the prompt and incisive manner in which General de Gaulle caused the French to remove themselves from a number of France's African colonies when the latter demanded their independence. The consequences were in no way disasterous. On the contrary, France's relations with certain of these states in the ensuing years have been among the happiest of those enjoyed by a former colonial European power with its erstwhile colonies.

Alas, Kennan's advice was not followed: In January 1979 an agreement was signed which turned the bases over to the Philippine government, and while our soldiers and equipment remain, only the Philippine flag now flies over these bases. In addition, the agreement included an American pledge of half a billion dollars "in economic aid".

Kennan feared, and rightly so, that this establishment of outright bribery of foreign leaders—who did not necessarily share our goals—would lead to a situation where "no one will think of accepting American military installation on his territory, no matter how helpful these may to be to his own defense, without demanding the highest price he thinks he can get for what we are supposed to see as an act of graciousness on his part." This has indeed been the case with both Greece and Turkey as well. In each case American bases have been permitted to remain only in return for large tributes from our government: $1.6-billion to Turkey ($1-billion of it military) and $700-million to Greece. And these payments only cover the four-year period ending in the spring of next year, 1980.

Regarding that area of Southeast Asia where we so recently fought, Kennan has this to say:

> There is no reason why we should be in a hurry to conclude relations of any kind with the [new] respective governments or to manifest any particular interest in what they are doing. They won. We lost. It is now their show. Let us be content if the period that ensues before we find it necessary to have anything more to do with them is a good long one. *And if, in the meantime, either the Chinese or the Russians dabble in their affairs, our attitude should be: you are heartily welcome to each other; it serves you both right.* (emphasis added)

With China herself, he warns us "not to try to push this relationship too far too fast." These are an enigmatic people, and we can't pretend to really know them, or their motives. "With people who are very different from oneself, a polite, respectful, but slightly distant and formal relationship is sometimes better, and presents fewer dangers, than effusive attempts at friendship." He further warns Americans of all political persuasions against becoming chummy with China because China too fears the Soviet Union. This "assumes a greater basic identity of our long-term interests with China than with Russia—something which is in no way proven. It would involve us in the Soviet-Chinese conflict, the issues of which have nothing to do with our own interests."

The Soviet threat

All of this leads, finally, to an analysis of the "central problem of American foreign policy"—the Soviet Union. Kennan devotes the final third of his book to this, and it is the most important part. It is written with a lucidity, an intellectual vigor and a freshness of outlook which is astonishing. Indeed, it would not be too much to call these last three chapters of this, which may well be his last book, a capstone to a remarkable career, nothing short of a work of art. I attempt to review them only with the most extreme reluctance. These 75 pages on the most important foreign policy issue of our day are simply too good to merit condensation. Suffice it to say that if one gets the book and reads only these chapters, it will be time well spent.

The current hostility to the Soviet Union emerged as it became evident that the benefits we were told to expect from the efforts at "detente" earlier in this decade were not in fact forthcoming. But all the glaring headlines in the press covered up the fact that, when it came to hard agreements, neither side had anything really new to offer. It was, at best, a temporary thaw in the Cold War, one of the several that has taken place since 1945. The sensationalist American press, bolstered by that showy public gimmickry known as "summit conferences," led the American people to believe that the Soviet Union would really make new, broad-ranging changes. (Kennan argues that we could get further with them in private, bilateral, agreements of a highly

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specific nature, concerned not with motives but with what exactly each side expects from the other.) The ensuing general disappointment played right into the hands of those who, highly suspicious of the Soviets, did not want detente with them in the first place.

These forces have recently gathered strength, and they have put forth a wide array of arguments to move America into increasing its military might. They point out, first, how the Russians have caught up—or surpassed us—in the arms race. It is alleged that we are spending less of our gross national product (only 5.75 percent of it) on defense than are the Soviets (11 to 13 percent). Our spending is now 14 percent below the level of the early 1960s and fully a third less than our peak Vietnam War spending. (All of this is in "real" dollars, allowing for inflation.) For roughly the past decade, Russia has outspent us in absolute dollar terms. In weaponry, the Soviets, it is alleged, have so added to their supply of strategic nuclear missiles that they now surpass us both in numbers (2,300 to 2,163) and throw weight. If these trends are continued, it is argued, Russia will soon have the capability to destroy so much of our arsenal in a first-strike attempt that we would have little defense left. In conventional weaponry, Soviet ground forces, the thesis goes, are more than double our own. We have 8,500 tanks to their 45,000. They have outproduced us in armored personnel carriers, artillery, tactical aircraft and helicopters. The Warsaw Pact command has 67 divisions compared to NATO's 29. Their Navy is said to have double the number of ships afloat compared to us.

These are certainly alarming statistics. But they are at least partly misleading. "From the mere assertion

that the Russians have surpassed us in numbers and throw-weight of strategic missiles," Kennan writes,

> the reader would scarcely suppose, for example, that we still had in the neighborhood of 10,000 independently targetable offensive warheads directed against the Soviet Union, compared with something like a third this number for the Russians, not to mention some 7,000 so-called tactical nuclear weapons kept by the United States in Western Europe, which exceed those arrayed against them by a similar factor. (The weakest of these "tactical" weapons is said, incidentally, to be three times the strength of the bomb used against Hiroshima).

When it is charged that Russia has twice the number of vessels afloat, "the term 'vessels' [is] capable of meaning anything from an admiral's barge to an aircraft carrier". Similarly with all the talk about their "higher expenditures." Since we can't really know *how much* the Soviets spend on their military, we can only draw on estimates from *how much these weapons would have cost us,* paying out high labor costs and paying in dollars. But this, for several reasons, is unreliable.

First of all, mere numerical comparisons between their number of weapons and ours tell us little. All depends on the time, place, and manner in which these weapons are used. A weapon effective on defense may be ineffective on offense. A weapon valuable on the plains may be useless in the mountains. It may be valuable only in the hands of a highly-motivated and trained force. The best type of weapon for some may not necessarily be the best for others. Thus, while the Soviets outnumber us 5 to 1 in tanks, we shouldn't feel endangered if we don't match them. Maybe they have overproduced, something which centrally-planned economies often do. But even if not, "one hears that anti-tank weapons are now of such effectiveness, and so easy to use, that large-scale tank warfare may be obsolete." Further, the American public is, through all this debate, in the dark. We must rely on our figures from the very people—our military establishment—who have a stake in increasing their own power and expenditures.

Finally, what emerges from these figures, if one sets aside for the moment all questions of Soviet intentions, is that while we have partially retrenched from our abnormally high Vietnam-War peak in spending, the Soviets have continued to spend at about the same rate they did before. The relative weight of the two defense establishments, insofar as it can be measured at all in statistical terms, has somewhat altered to our disadvantage. We still have, however, superiority in most types of weaponry. And we cannot know, but only assume, when we say that this is proof they intend to add more weapons, reaching us, and then even surpassing us. "The change", says Kennan, "that has occurred is simply the reflection—not of some new and menacing increase in the rate of development of Soviet armed forces, but of a temporary diminution, since Vietnam, in the rate of development of our own."

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It is charged that the Russians seek influence in the Third World. But so do the other great powers. What differentiates Soviet overseas activity from ours is their lack of bases. They have the occasional use (not control) of an airport in Angola for reconnaissance purposes, and we believe them to have similar arrangements on the other side of Africa. In any event, it is nothing like our own string of bases ringing the Soviet Union from Germany to Greece, Turkey, Korea, the Philippines, and, as Kennan says, "I don't know where else".

Moreover, the Russians have often failed to fully win over Third World nations. "Soviet efforts to bend the countries of the Near East to their uses have, with the partial exception of Iraq and Libya, been signally unsuccessful." Indeed, they have even been unceremoniously thrown out of Egypt and other countries.

Soviet intentions

In most of our eyes runs the same view of Soviet intentions toward us: briefly, that the Russians are still inspired by a desire to achieve world domination; that they view war with us as the inevitable outcome of the ideological and political conflicts between us; and that therefore Soviet armed forces are viewed by their leaders as offensive rather than defensive in nature.

These charges will be treated specifically below, but to speak generally, it is very dangerous to assume another nation is preparing for war, and thus prepare for it yourself. Wars have, in this way, become a self-fulfilling prophecy, as witness World War I. The suggestion that the Soviets would be willing to lose several tens of millions of people in order to gain world domination forgets that the hellish trauma of World War II has not left them. Most Americans don't realize that the Soviets lost *20 million* of their citizens during Hitler's war, and this out of a total population roughly equal to our own at that time. What are we to say to the charge that, in effect, Soviet leadership lacks all the normal attributes of humanity and is solely motivated by a blind desire for our destruction? As Kennan says, "This effort at the dehumanizing of the opponent—the insistence of seeing him as the embodiment of all evil—has bedeviled the leaders of American opinion in two world wars." It should certainly have no place in peacetime.

When Lenin attained power in 1917, the Western world was in turmoil. Centuries-old monarchies were collpasing, class structures were being undermined, and no firm alternative had taken their places. Lenin had the hope that communism would, and he held up the banner of world revolution to bring it about. World *revolution*, not world *conquest*. There was a difference. Revolution was to come from within, as the proletariat of each nation rose up to break the shackles of their oppression. The role of Russian communism was to assist this revolution—to support it as they could with morale, material, and even weapons—but not to *create* it. Actually, it soon became apparent that world revolution was not imminent, and because of the starvation and misery caused by those first few years of forced collectivism and outright civil war, by 1921 the preservation and development of the Communist state *within Russia* had become the prime consideration. In the years since then, the language of "world revolution" has remained; for as a secular religion, communism needs to hold up hope for a glorious future. And, since the Chinese and others have long baited the Russians for betraying true communism, Russia needs at least the rhetoric and appearance of being "revolutionary". "But behind this verbal smokescreen, the men in the Kremlin, [have been] acting overwhelmingly . . . in the tradition of nationalist Russian rulers of earlier periods." Virtually their every international act has been guided by a purely nation-state desire to preserve the security of their heartland. This is particularly true in the foisting of Communism on Eastern Europe. One must remember that Russia had been invaded *three* times through Eastern Europe in the scant 30-year period from 1914 to 1945, by the Germans during the two world wars and by the allies shortly after the Bolshevik revolution. Stalin did everything he knew how to make sure that it would not happen again. Therefore all the central and southern European lands *contiguous to Russia* were colonized as buffer zones. Countries like Greece, where a strong and popular Communist partisan force begged Stalin to help them gain power, had their pleas turned down. Greece, after all, was useless as a buffer zone for Russia; it was not contiguous to Russia.

Further, Russia had always coveted influence in Eastern Europe. Indeed, one must ask whether any Russian government, Czarist or Communist, would not have acted that way in light of the invasions and mass death of Russians combined with the opportunity to move into Eastern Europe which existed in 1945. Since that time Russia has colonized no more. They realize the outright act of further contiguous territorial expansion would cause a world war. And as for the influence they wield within the resistance movements of Southern Africa and with leftist politicians elsewhere in the Third World, Kennan is "unable to see in this phenomenon anything that is particularly new, anything that falls outside the range of normal great-power behavior." The effort to seat friendly governments in distant places is one which, Lord knows, is not unknown to us. "Why it should cause such great surprise or alarm when it proceeds from the Soviet Union I fail to understand . . . Too often, a failure on the Soviet side to respond to such appeals (from leftist leaders) for support is to throw the respective factions into the arms of the Chinese."

All the threatening talk of menacing Soviet intentions also fails to take into account the nature of the present Soviet leadership. It is, as governing classes in great countries go, an extremely old one. "The average of the top five or six figures is well over seventy. About half the members of the all-powerful Politburo (full and alternate) are upwards of sixty-six years of age. Half the members of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers (the governmental counterpart of the Politiburo, which is the supreme Party body) are over sixty." This means that they are

men who have had long and sobering governmental experience. Men of this age and experience are not normally given to adventuristic policies . . . The composition of the Politburo and other senior bodies has remained remarkably stable for well over a decade. And this stability has communicated itself to the entire senior bureaucracy—political, military and economic—numbering several hundred people.

The last elections to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, in 1976, saw 90 percent of the members re-elected, which means that they had been there at least five years. Most, in fact, had been there longer.

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It is therefore very difficult to enter the senior bureaucracy. Candidates are obviously screened very closely for such qualities as "steadiness, balance of view, ability to fit into the bureaucratic machinery, and a quiet loyalty and dependability that does not preclude independent initiative and judgment."

The Soviet leadership must be seen, then, as an old and aging group of men, commanding—but also very deeply involved with—a vast and highly stable bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is very much a creature of habit. It is effective in governing the country, but it would not be a very flexible instrument for sudden or abrupt changes. This does not preclude a certain amount of conspiratorial activity on the part of the secret intelligence services and of those sections of the Party which deal with clandestine operations in foreign countries. It does mean that the Soviet apparatus of power is not one that can suddenly be turned around and switched, and in the course of a few days, from the normal governing of the country to the huge and wholly abnormal exertions of a major war.

In another, equally important aspect of the internal situation, the Soviet government, quite simply, has not won the hearts and minds of the people. Lack of interest in official dogma is widespread and scarcely concealed in the Soviet Union, and even more pronounced in the Eastern European countries. There is an appalling growth of alcoholism, particularly among the working youth. Also, religious sentiment persists despite official efforts to discourage it. Further, while most of the Soviet government is Russian, most of the population is now non-Russian, and feels—justifiably—oppressed by the Russian state. As this non-Russian group is increasing at a faster rate than are the Russians, nationalism will be a growing problem in the future.

To add to this is the abject failure in economic performance which no libertarian audience can misunderstand. Rigid state central planning has meant continual shortages of basic foodstuffs and the need to import massive amounts of food from the West. With all these factors taken together, it is highly doubtful that the Soviets would be willing to risk a war with so unfirm a base.

So there we have it. Armed with this awareness, Kennan urges us to rethink our present war-like stance—and fear—against the Soviets. Among other things, we should take unilateral measures to reduce our massive arms stores, as a gesture of good faith. We should immediately ban the testing of nuclear weapons. We should abandon the principle of "first use", the belief that we can only assure our own defense by initiating the use of nuclear weapons, or basing our defense plans on such initiation—about the same thing. We should, finally, encourage all moves that would lead to a de-escalation of fears, arms, and tensions between our two nations. For a continuance of the policies of recent years increases the probability of a world war, the consequences of which are simply too horrible to think about. Mr. Kennan deserves both our thanks for writing this clearly reasoned book and our support against the vicious attacks he is now suffering at the hands of those who would continue to sabre-rattle against the Soviets.

Christopher Weber writes frequently for LR.

A trivialized romance

JOANN ROTHBARD

The Romance of American Communism, *by Vivian Gornick. Basic Books, 262 pp., $10.*

ANYONE WHO HAS ATtended a college in New York within the last twenty years has met many a Vivian Gornick—Jewish, leftist, Freudian, feminist, and always consulting her feelings as her touchstone. We must wait to see which trend is around the corner in New York, to know what she'll be next.

Because some of the authoritarianism and sectarianism that she sees in the current wave of feminism reminds her of fights within the Communist Party in the U.S. in the past, *this* Vivian Gornick decided to write this book about some of the people who were in the Party in the '30s, '40s, and '50s. However, we look in vain in her book for examples of sectariansim and conflict. "Romance" is the most important word in her title. Romance may seem incongruous with communism, but it is entirely appropriate here, because Gornick presents the comradeship and sense of being in the middle of things, of changing history, without treatment of the *ideas* that were the very reason for Communism. Yet she writes many times of the endless arguments, discussions, and screaming that went on at Party and fellow travellers' meetings. Arguments about *what*?

Gornick considers herself lucky to have grown up in a communist family, the sort of people who considered New Dealers to be right-wingers. She remembers sitting in the kitchen when she was a child listening to her parents and other workers talking about issues: "Oh that talk! That passionate, transforming talk! I understood nothing of what they were saying, but I was excited beyond words by the richness of their rhetoric, the intensity of their arguments, the urgency and longing behind that hot river of words that came ceaselessly pouring out of all of them." She is still thrilled by the richness of their rhetoric, but she is not interested in the least in

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the actual *content* of what they said. Or she still cannot understand it.

Most of this book consists of interviews with ex-Communists, who tell, as part of their stories, how they got into the Party. One theme running throughout almost all interviews, is that these people didn't feel at home anywhere before they joined the party. Many were immigrants who felt alien in the United States, some were native-born Americans who wandered around the country rootless and detached, while others were rich people who as children had been neglected by their parents. But once in the Communist Party they found a home, a place where they "belonged." We are apparently to believe that the Communist Party of the United States during the 1930s and 1940s, was a sort of Mother Figure, embracing her children and giving succor.

It is typical of this book that Vivian Gornick continually describes these people as "beautiful." Nearly all of them are from the age of 50 to their 70s, yet they are made to sound like inmates of a Hollywood studio. They are "slim . . . blue eyed . . . possessed of a quiet easy elegance . . . tall, handsome . . . in magnificent shape . . . tenderest eyes, high clear forehead . . . young-faced . . . expressive humorous eyes . . . impressive leonine head . . . a beautiful woman . . . aristocratic nose . . . energetic . . ." and so on. One man is described as looking like an intelligent John Wayne. I am not privy to John Wayne's IQ; probably neither is Gornick. But she has an *a priori* guide—John Wayne is a right-winger, so he is dumb. Again, typical.

Once in the Communist Party, these people thought that the revolution was just around the corner, and this gave meaning to their lives. They were living intense, absorbing lives. Richard Wright wrote as an ex-communist: "There was no agency in the world so capable of making men feel the earth and the people upon it as the Communist Party." This is the famous *engagé* of European Marxists. Why does it seem to be only *engagé* to be involved in leftist causes? Weren't the Nazis in the '30s *engagé*? Why is it not *engagé* to be involved in the Libertarian Party, or the Presbyterian Church, or the Begonia Society?

Looking back in the mid-1970s to their lives as Party members, many of these people see those days as the best part of their lives, One says, "I was a Communist. And being a Communist made me better than I was. It was a great moral adventure of my life. I wouldn't—not then and not now—have traded it for anything." Another: "Right, wrong, errors, blind pro-Sovietism, Democratic centralism, the lot notwithstanding. In our lives as Communists we had community. We had standing. We had that civilizing sense of connectedness, it's the heart and soul of all civilized life." To some of them, the Party, despite its apparent withering away, was successful: "And we're everywhere, everywhere. We saved this fucking country. We went to Spain, and because we did America understood facism. We made Vietnam come to an end, we're in there in Watergate. We built the CIO, we got Roosevelt elected, we started black civil rights, we forced this shitty country into every good piece of action and legislation it has ever taken. We did the dirty work and the Labor and Capital establishments got the rewards. The Party helped make democracy work." One woman said: "If they'd thrown me out in the Thirties or Forties? Oh, I would have killed myself."

Once in, the Party kept them involved: "Busy, busy, busy. Nobody can say life in the Communist Party was dull." Frank Meyer, when he was an anti-Communist, said that the Party had kept him so occupied that he didn't have time to do the fundamental thinking necessary to see the error of Marxism, until he was in the army. Imagine a life compared to which Basic Training is leisurely.

It is hard to conceive of a book such as this of over 250 pages on communism in which the concept of "capital" never occurs. *Capitalists* are very occasionally mentioned: they are all "shits" or "motherfuckers," but never capital. Thus, people can be persuaded by arguments such as: "Look at that building. Workers built it, but capitalists live in it." Wow! Deep!

The Party sent intellectuals into factories, ordered people to move to distant parts of the country, wrecked marriages by expelling one partner only, and made many people desolate by sending them underground for years, to live in loneliness. Yet few people left the Party for reasons such as these. Why did they leave? Some left in 1948 when the Party backed Henry Wallace; one left, charmingly, because the Party attacked psychoanalysis; but the biggest upheaval came in 1956. At the 20th Congress in April, 1956, Khrushchev made a speech denouncing Stalin, and recounting his massacres. Party members were in shock; they left in droves. But many did not leave voluntarily—they were expelled at trials at which close friends and family members denounced them. The trials seemed to be for more personal crimes, such as associating with bourgeois, but Gornick does not go into the reasons for most expulsions. She is more interested in the "trauma" suffered by the victims.

A few were glad to be out of the party: "The Marxist-Leninist jargon was supposed to be evidence of high intelligence. But I found it put to uses of intimidation, and finally I felt it evidenced more a fear of life than it did of genuinely high intelligence." But many more look upon their Communist years as the best of their lives. One says: "The world is smaller, darker by far for me than it was when I was a Communist." Another: "For me the context was Marxism and the CP. They gave my work a meaning and an intensity it will never have again. . . . I have no regrets, no regrets at all. On the other hand, I have no passion either, anymore."

The glory is gone for these people. They have gone back to ordinary lives without their guiding star. When Gornick expressed surprise that one of them is a slumlord, he laughed and explained: "They say that the Communists became landlords and the Trotskyists became professors."

These people are not Communists, but they are communists. There are no capitalists among them. They still fight for tenant rights, organize strikes, boycott lettuce. As one says: "The Party gave me Marxism. Everything in my life flows from that simple fact, everything returns to it. No matter how far I may seem to stray from any recognizable relation to that fact, it is there inside me. It is the center of my gravity, sooner or later the arc returns on its course to that center. In that sense the Party will live inside me until I die, and I remain accountable to it."

The Communist Party was not commendable but it was important, and it deserves more than this emotional mishmash. It was a political party with political goals. Yet we look in vain here for any hard facts. Gornick has instead taken a

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significant part of American life and trivialized it into a mess of sentimental feelings.

JoAnn Rothbard writes frequently for LR.

Pot profiled

MARSHALL E. SCHWARTZ

Reefer Madness: The History of Marijuana in America *by Larry Sloman. Bobbs-Merrill, 404 pp., $12.95.*

HISTORY IS SUPPOSED to have some elements of science to it: recording factual observations, tracing effects back to their causes, interpreting these relationships in the light of previously identified patterns. Like any other discipline, history has its own methods and techniques to achieve these goals—methods which must be learned like those of chemistry or paleontology, physics or anthropology.

So when someone trained in sociology tries to write a history of marijuana in the United States, what we get certainly is *not* history. Thus, Larry Sloman's *Reefer Madness* is a frequently stimulating, frequently frustrating, and annoyingly disjointed pastiche which accurately reflects the author's background in sociology and magazine reportage. But it certainly isn't history. When he's conducting an interview or sketching a vignette of 1970s American culture, Sloman is at his best. And the second half of *Reefer Madness* is basically nothing more than a collection of short pieces of pop sociology, chapters that could well have been magazine articles on their own.

But the problem with *Reefer Madness* is that Sloman takes his book's subtitle too seriously, and spends the first 250 pages trying to pretend he is an historian. And failing. As a result, the reader may well give up on Sloman halfway through his obsessive ramblings about Narcotics Commissioner Harry J. Anslinger, the origins of the Marijuana Tax Act of 1937, and how reefer came to Harlem, before the author returns to his own milieu.

"Sloman does a fine job of showing how pot has become a mundane part of American life."

What is even more frustrating about this book than watching an amateur try to write history is the fact that Sloman's meanderings actually contain some first-rate material: facts and observations that could make up the heart of a cogent political and economic history of pot in the United States.

Any such history, to be worthy of the title, has to look at marijuana in relation to other recreational drugs, whether they are smoked, swallowed, injected, or inhaled. And this Sloman fails to do; so perforce he fails to see the patterns in marijuana legislation which follow those established by laws concerning cigarettes, alcohol, heroin, cocaine, and so on. This omission is especially surprising in light of an interview he conducted with one of Anslinger's former agents—who outlines the whole picture. But before looking at the specifics, let's examine the patterns that flow through all such efforts at prohibition.

Perhaps the central fact is that all "vice" laws—efforts to legislate morality, rather than to punish the use of force or fraud—are *not* aimed at stopping vice, contrary to popular myth. The primary aim, as with any other governmental regulatory effort, is to create a *monopoly* in vice. A by-product of such legislation is the creation of a legal, rather than economic, underclass: a "them" who are morally inferior to "us," a "them" who can be considered less than human and on whom all sorts of dastardly acts can be blamed, a "them" to whom even the (state-created) economic underclass can feel superior. Drug legislation, as one form of "vice" law, is simply a state grant of economic privilege under the guise of protecting the citizenry from some imagined mortal threat (or moral sin). The effect of laws concerning opiates, barbiturates, amphetamines, and cocaine is fairly clear. A three-tiered monopoly is created, whereby only state-sanctioned pharmaceutical companies may import or manufacture such drugs, only state-sanctioned physicians may ordain their

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use, and only state-sanctioned pharmacists may dispense them. And what happens to individuals who are unable to obtain these substances through this legal monopoly? They must purchase these drugs on the black market, from entrepreneurs who maintain an *illegal* monopoly by buying the favors of police agents who are supposed to prohibit such transactions—and thus must pay exorbitantly inflated prices.

With tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana, the picture is somewhat different. While prohibition has been attempted with all these drugs (and still reigns supreme for marijuana), the principal tool for control has been taxation. Between 1870 and 1915, between one-half and two-thirds of the entire income of the federal government came from the tax on liquor. A pseudomonopoly was enforced by making it illegal to sell alcohol without collecting this tax. How, then, was the United States able to eliminate its major source of revenue, through the Eighteenth Amendment, in 1919? Because six years before that event the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment removed the original consitutional prohibition against the income tax, thereby presenting the government with an even more powerful (and capricious) tool for robbing its citizens.

Under this spreading miasma of prohibitionism not only were alcohol (the Eighteenth Amendment) and opiates (the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914) outlawed, but cigarette smoking was under severe legislative attack: In 1921, cigarettes were illegal in 14 states, and anticigarette legislation was pending in 28 more. Yet there were almost no laws against marijuana use. In fact, a 1920 pamphlet issued by the Department of Agriculture urged Americans to grow cannabis as a profitable crop!

What happened to reverse this trend? Why, after the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, did the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (read Harry J. Anslinger) end its resistance to include pot in its purview, so that the Marijuana Tax Act was passed by Congress in 1937 almost without opposition?

In one interview—with former Bureau agent Howard Diller—Sloman (or, rather, Diller) presents some provocative answers to these questions. This one chapter, Diller's analysis of the political role of the Bureau and its notorious chief, is the most telling and most significant in the book from a libertarian viewpoint.

As for the drug manufacturers themselves, Diller—who worked for the bureau during the late 1950s and early 1960s—declares:

> The profits in controlled substances by the drug manufacturers of this country are enormous. There's probably no more lucrative industry than the drug industry of this country. During the entire Anslinger administration there never has been [sic] any investigation or any imposition of controls or inquiry into the high profit of that industry . . . There were only three companies, as I recall, that had the right to import opium into the country for the manufacture of opiates. That was French, Kline and King, New York Quinine, and Merck Company. It was a monopoly . . . The Bureau imposed enforcement of these monopolies,

"Harry Anslinger managed to maintain his hoax about the evils of marijuana by publishing completely fictitious statistics to 'prove' his case."

Anslinger's main support came from the industries his bureau was charged with regulating—the doctors and the drug manufacturers—Diller points out. "The AMA held Anslinger up as one of their angels," he declares. "Since a serious part of that profession has to do with drugs . . . so long as Harry Anslinger was Commissioner, there was virtually no federal prosecution of any member of the medical profession." (Anslinger, a former Prohibition agent, undoubtedly remembered how physicians profited by the Volstead Act: During the first six months after its enactment, more than 15,000 doctors and 57,000 pharmacists and drug manufacturers applied for licenses to prescribe and sell liquor, and by 1928 doctors made an estimated $40-million annually writing prescriptions for alcohol.) and no one else was permitted to deal with it.

But why did no one question these policies of Anslinger? Inside the Bureau, disagreement was heresy, punishable by expulsion. Outside, people just didn't have the information. Diller explains:

> He had no tolerance for disagreement. Anslinger believed very strongly that the best government was one that was a repressive one. That the people were not capable basically of controlling their passions and their needs. That the way to control them, in their best interests would be to impose restrictions of one kind or another. The thing that Anslinger concerned himself with a lot was the dissemination of information. He completely disagreed with the free exchange of ideas on the subject. He believed that the free exchange of ideas would result in contamination of the brains of the good people. Therefore, don't disseminate anything negative and you cut it off at the roots.

Thus, Anslinger considered the La Guardia Report—the results of a study ordered by the mayor of New York City in 1938, and issued in the early 1940s—to be "contraband" because it smashed all the myths about pot (the "marijuana psychosis," that its use leads to use of opiates and other drugs, that users are more likely than others to commit crimes, etc.) which the commissioner had so zealously nurtured and cultivated for more than a decade.

After fending off, for a number of years, zealous appeals to include marijuana among the drugs under Bureau control, Anslinger reversed his stand in the mid-1930s and by 1937, the Marijuana Tax Act had outlawed pot. Why this strange flip-flop, when taking control of pot meant more work with no extra money for the Bureau? Diller offers his theory:

> Prohibition wiped out a great national industry, and the economy was damaged. Lo and behold, that industry was able to overcome and repeal prohibition laws after a fourteen-year period. They were concerned that after having made this great accomplishment, they would not have another commodity that would be competitive to their industry. The thought at that time was, once the use of marijuana was to become known and its effects realized, persons would find it easier to smoke and gain a feeling of euphoria to one degree or another that was better than alcohol, and that would severely hurt the industry.
>
> I strongly suspect the Bureau itself was supportive of the alcohol industry, and I think they said, "Listen, we have to enact legislation." After all, the 1937 Act was only three years after Prohibition. It's certainly logical that one follows the other. The alcohol industry was concerned with a competing substance, and the Bureau was a natural to enforce it. In reality,

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the whole thing was a bugaboo and was an instance of our government and one of its agencies being used to protect an industry. We have it in two major businesses, the pharmacological industry and the alcohol industry.

How did Anslinger manage to maintain this hoax about the evils of marijuana (and about the Bureau in general) for the quarter-century from the passage of the Tax Act until his retirement in 1962? By lying, according to Diller: by publishing completely fictitious statistics to "prove" his case. The individuals who kept the records "would phony up the statistics. They had IBM machines that were frauds; they were there just to probe; they were doing things scientifically. But when they received the figures, they would chop off a zero or divide by three to come up with the statistics." Anslinger "explained it away that he didn't want to panic the country. He didn't want Congress to lose confidence . . . He was protecting the country."

Since the illicit trade in drugs (including marijuana) is a highly profitable, albeit risky, endeavor, why didn't drug entrepreneurs try to finance a campaign to counteract government lies about these substances, or make serious legal challenges in the courts? Economic self-interest, of course. Just as the pharmaceutical companies had been granted legal monopolies, black-market drug sellers had their own monopoly of sorts. Diller explains:

> [I]f you were in charge of an organized crime family concerned with trafficking in drugs and making millions of dollars, the only thing that would enable you to make a lot of money is that there is a high risk in the business. This eliminates your overwhelming percentage of competition. So if I was in the drug-trafficking industry, what I would want is good strong strict enforcement or else I'd be out of business. Everyone would get into it if there wasn't that risk. It was in the interest of the underworld to have an Anslinger, otherwise the price of drugs would never be what it is. . . . There was really no government effort to eliminate the drug-trafficking business. Never has been.

Major marijuana dealers, who Diller, now an attorney, numbers among his clients,

> would be unalterably opposed to any drastic change in the marijuana laws because it would put them out of business. The major traffickers are making oodles and oodles of money, and they hope that sometimes there are busts to keep the price up. I suspect that a group of traffickers, if the downward trend of enforcement of the marijuana laws continues, will go to the legislature and revitalize Anslinger's 1937 article [decrying the horrors of pot] and remind the legislature that it is dangerous and that heavier penalties are needed. . . . We're living in a criminal economy, and decriminalization would hurt so many different people.

"The Great Prohibitionist's memorial to himself is the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, which enshrines him in international law."

But Anslinger was not only a faithful servant of the Corporate State, he was also a zealot in the cause of prohibition. Even after his retirement, Anslinger continued to fight for his cause, to force his brand of morality on the rest of the world, whether they wanted it or not. Still believing in his mechanistic view of human behavior (that drugs *cause* users to commit crimes), rather than the free-will view (that some criminals happen to use certain drugs), Anslinger scored perhaps his greatest triumph in April 1967, when the Senate ratified the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (which somehow included marijuana and cocaine under the "narcotic" label) by a vote of 84-0.

Anslinger had been instrumental in drafting this international treaty (currently ratified by 108 nations) in 1961, but had at first recommended that the United States not sign it because some provisions were too watered down for his taste. Why did the Single Convention suddenly become so important to Anslinger six years later, so important that he was one of the only *three* witnesses—all in favor—who testified at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's one-day hearing? His testimony explains the reversal:

> Another important reason for becoming a party to the 1961 convention is the marijuana problem. . . . Several groups in the United States are loudly agitating to liberalize controls, and, in fact, to legalize its use. In the convention it is very specific that we must prevent its misuse. If the United States becomes a party to the 1961 convention we will be able to use our treaty obligations to resist legalized use of marijuana. This discussion is going on all over the country, in many universities, and in fringe groups, and it is rather disturbing.

What Anslinger relied on was an old Supreme Court decision in a case entitled *Missouri* v. *Holland*, in which the Court ruled that hunters couldn't kill certain migratory birds because of a U.S. treaty with Canada and Mexico protecting these birds—the federal treaty took precedence over states' rights. Thus, he argued, states could lower penalties for pot as low as they wanted to, but they couldn't legalize it—ever—unless the Senate renounced its ratification of the Single Convention on Narcotics. "We've got [it] locked up so tightly now, they'll never change the law," he claimed.

This was the Great Prohibitionist's memorial to himself. With almost no evidence, he gained congressional approval for the Marijuana Tax Act in 1937 (Sloman's excerpts from the hearings are classic examples of legislative ignorance and stupidity), and established a legal monopoly for alcohol as America's recreational drug. With even less evidence, he enshrined his personal preference—for the drug of Western culture over the drug of Eastern culture—in international law 30 years later.

But there's just too little of this sort of reporting to justify Sloman's subtitle, "The History of Marijuana in America." He does a fine job of showing how pot has become an almost mundane part of American life, from a middle-class family in Queens, to executives and professionals in suburbia, to a young millionaire dealer, to the head of Robert Burton Associates (makers of E-Z Wider rolling papers), to the would-be politicians of NORML. Maybe it all comes down to the comment by Joe Nellis, chief counsel for the House Select Committee on Narcotics, and an opponent of marijuana legalization:

> "Well, for every inspirational story about what marijuana can make you think of, I can give you an equal story about depression and lack of motivation and so on. You picks your poison and you takes your choice." Nellis smiled and took a long, deep drag on his cigarette.

Except, of course, the State doesn't want people to make their own choices.

Marshall E. Schwartz is a contributing editor of LR.

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On View

Hard core, soft core

DAVID BRUDNOY

LET US CONSIDER SKIN in flicks, and skin flicks, and what is called "pornography" by people who like the sound of the word, though it defines nothing objectively and refers only to (subjective) states of mind. The pioneer libertarian theorist and activist Theodore Schroeder, whose frustrated life, hard times and voluminous writings I came to know when writing my doctoral dissertation a few years ago, likened "pornography" to witchcraft: neither exists, but both have been pursued with a vengeance by those who believe(d) they exist(ed); both—and this our contemporary, Dr. Thomas Szasz, has also stressed—are fictions of some people's imagination. Which has not kept the clergy, the legislators, and the moralists from crusading, legislating, and bleating about them. While we accept nowadays that witchcraft is fantasy, we are continually warned against "pornography," most specifically in magazines and films and books.

That pornography doesn't exist is not sufficient reason to believe that there are no films that can in common chatter be called "pornographic." The term has a life beyond logic, and rather than clutter the page with quotation marks we had just as well use it as it is commonly used and try to understand what is meant by it. This, because of the appearance recently of an important and in some ways fine movie called *Hardcore,* of which more in due course.

We are not here discussing the movies that are rated in the so-called subterranean press XXX, and which play in very small, usually overheated or undercooled buildings in big cities, entrance to which is gained by passing a five dollar bill to somebody seated behind a smudged glass window and yourself through a turnstyle; these are the movies that go by a couple of dozen names in a couple of dozen cities, that change names every time they reappear, and that usually contain only minimal dialogue, this generally of the "ooh, oh, ah, ah, AH, oh, yes, yes, yes, baby, BABY, do it, do it, do it" variety; and that are accompanied by lousy (usually disco) music and concentrate on a minimal amount of foreplay and maximum display of orgasm. Some other time, perhaps, but not just now. We are looking this month at major, successful, expensively produced movies designed for the general public and advertised proudly in the mainstream press.

Certain patterns emerge. The X rating, which was once slapped on almost any movie that contained nudity except among infants, is now reserved almost exclusively for movies that show erections or actual penetration. Female nudity, both frontal and dorsal, is now so common that R suffices for the rating, and male back nudity is no longer rare, nor, in fleeting glances, is male frontal nudity. The naked adult human body and, for that matter, a certain degree of what passes as sexual intercourse—the writhings about, the gruntings and groanings, the pained and then satisfied facial expressions without depicted genital contact: all that is now commonplace in regular commercial movies and is

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"Today Louis Malle's *Pretty Baby,* which dwells on a whore house in New Orleans, circa 1917, bears an "R" rating; a few years ago it couldn't have been shown in any major American theatre."

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very often called "soft core" by people who feel they have to call it something and who reserve the term "hard core" for the nitty gritty.

Consider some recent movies that give us just enough flesh to qualify in some ways as "soft core," including a few movies that throw in a bit of *superfluous* flesh to satisfy the perceived cravings of the American movie audience today. Remember also that the American movie audience today is young, primarily urban and suburban, self-congratulatorily "sophisticated," and slightly more affluent than the population at large. The elderly do not patronize the movies in any great numbers, nor, except for an occasional "family movie," is the cinema much patronized by those considered lower-middle in class or "conservative" in politics. A standard feature of the reflexive conservative press, in fact, is an increasingly hysterical alarmism about the state of the popular media. While almost any bit of sanctimonious drivel will pass muster in such organs, so long as it is "wholesome," the presence of a bared buttock or pubic hair, or, for that matter, the common language of the street, is enough to send the purveyers of Middle American mythology into fits.

Herewith, then, a brief mention of several films that can in some important way be considered "soft core," at least in part. Most of these films appeared last year, and most are still being shown here and there across the land. *Bread and Chocolate*, made by the Italian Franco Brusati, contained a scene of exquisite sensuality, in which the protagonist, an Italian failing miserably at finding a decent living in Switzerland, sees, in the company of a family of nearly dehumanized chicken farmers, also Italians, a group of gorgeous Swiss blond teenagers swimming nude in a stream. The girls and the boys are perfect physically, and stand in the film for the comfort and ease that the Italian worker aliens in Switzerland find unattainable. Coming about three-fourths of the way into the film, the scene provides the ideal contrast to the squalor and stolidness that has been depicted up to that point. The movie carries a prestigious award from a major Italian Catholic organization: it does not, therefore, contain any genitalia, only the undeniable hint of genitalia, and it is a scene that is more erotic than most far more explicit movies.

Louis Malle's *Pretty Baby* occasioned a brief flurry of protests, and was banned in Canada, because it dwelt on a whore house in New Orleans, circa 1917, where the leading prostitute raises her just barely pubescent daughter. Susan Sarandon played the mother; Keith Carradine, the photographer and repressed sensualist; and the budding sensation, Brooke Shields, the little girl. The prostitutes are seen now and again in understandable states of undress, the men never, and at one crucial point the little girl is served up to the highest bidder, a certified virgin. Here it was not just a glimpses of flesh but the forbidden aspects of what is cutely called "kiddie porn" that infuriated the moralists. The movie bears an R rating; a few years ago it couldn't have been shown in any major American theatre.

Eyes of Laura Mars used Faye Dunaway better than most of her recent films have, and though it was marred by a wholly gratuitous dollop of ESPism, it made for a fairly good thriller. The title character is a photographer who not only uses her eyes against her will as a camera seeing into the future, always the grim, fatal future of her models, but also to photograph women in advertising such as we see more and more often these days: the advertising that peddles some item of wearing apparel by showing a woman in some state of subjugation. The advertising is exploitative, to be sure; it is also a staple nowadays in even the more respected women's magazines, not to mention the magazines that carry respectable authors in and around the photographs of naked ladies. The implied message of this film is that Laura Mars incites the killer to his slaughters by photographing women in a way that is guaranteed to bring out the sadistic tendencies in men. Again, the rating is R, the nudity is fleeting and not total, but the movie is patently arousing. It keeps its males fully clothed, its females frequently in a twilight zone between the acceptable and the pornographic.

Get Out Your Handkerchiefs, one of the most delectable of the 1978 foreign films, sets up this premise: a beautiful lady (Carol Laure) is a dutiful but bored wife, properly submissive to her husband (Gérard Depardieu), but clearly uninterested in his advances. Hubby brings a second man (Patrick Dewaere) into the ménage, hoping to arouse his wife thereby, but winding up only with a good buddy, with whom he alternates nights abed with the wife. Only the accidental enterance into their lives of a horny, precocious 13-year-old boy satisfies the lady. As the kid says, when he makes his proposal to the lady one night in her room, "if you don't let me, I may have to wait five, six years for another chance like this." Good thinking, kid; and sure enough, he gets his way, she comes out of her shell, the husband and his pal are eased out of the picutre, and the older woman (say, 25) and her very lucky young lover live happily ever after. Of course the movie inspired vigorous protests from the morality-in-media crackpots: we did, after all, see lots of skin, and even worse, we had "child molesting." Actually we had a child seducing an adult, but the facts need never intrude in such discussions, need they?

A couple of the soppier movies of 1978, designed, in fact, for the widest possible audience of all but infants, displayed a more recent ingredient of the mainstream cinema: a greater concentration on unclothed men than on unclothed women. In *Oliver's Story*, the nauseating sequel to *Love Story*, Oliver Barrett IV (Ryan O'Neal) spends an inordinate amount of time lingering in the sheets, mooning; and in *Ice Castles*, the story of a great young skier who falls and suffers blindness, the athlete's boyfriend, played by the likeliest current candidate for the Eternal Teenager, Robby Benson, is shown in one scene talking to his sweetheart on the 'phone. She's fully clothed; he, for no reason other than the moviemakers' desire to give the movie's presumed audience what it wants, which is Robby undressed (sporting a beautiful California tan, which he somehow maintains throughout the Minnesota winter), is whispering sweet nothings to his beloved while modeling jockey shorts. The moment is a harmless interlude in a harmless tear-jerker, but it is there for one reason only, obvious to anyone who understands what the soft-core cinema is about.

Warriors, which became a cause célèbre in February and March owing to the riots, large and small, that occurred after various groups had seen the movie (and the few killings of young people by other young people who had just come from the movie), contains no total nudity at all, nor any

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language beyond that routinely heard in the hip-vulgar flicks of our time. But while the women function solely as props on which to hang a few silly sequences, the gang known as the Warriors is made up of a half-dozen exceptionally well-built young men whose gang costume is snug trousers and sleeveless leather vests worn, usually, over nothing but what Mother Nature gave them. The movie is by no means intended for the "gay" audience, any more than *Ice Castles* is so intended: it is aimed at youths. Why does it dwell so lovingly on appealing male flesh?

Midnight Express, one of the most popular and most respected movies of 1978, is set primarily in a hideous Turkish prison, and sets out to tell, in a somewhat expurgated version, the true story of a smartass young American, Billy Hayes, who thought he could smuggle a large quantity of hashish out of Turkey and found that he could not. In his book of the same name, Hayes describes the love affair he shared with another inmate, a Swede. In the movie this is reduced to a brief exercise scene, a demure refusal in the showers, and then on to the more serious business of the film, which is graphic depiction of the horrors of a sadistic prison system and the idiocy of restrictive drug laws. But while the movie accurately reproduces Billy Hayes's primary emotional relationship (to a woman), the flesh scenes are all male: first, Hayes (Brad Davis) from the rear, being interrogated by the Turkish authorities, and then the coy (and beautifully suggestive) gymnastic and near-coital shower scene with the Swede. Again, of course, an R rating. And again, a useful example of contemporary soft-core cinema.

In Praise of Older Women is a recent Canadian film starring Tom Berenson (the killer in *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*), who is extremely attractive but who, for some reason, suffers rejection from girls his own age, though older women (Karen Black, Susan Strasberg, Helen Shaver, Marilyn Lightstone, and others) rescue him from his loneliness and happily show him the nocturnal ropes. Berenson spends most of the movie naked, fleetingly frontally so, but most often just rippling from the waist up and humping overhead. The women are as often naked, but there are more of them and just the one of him, so we get some variety in the ladies, each of whom is made of a perfect pattern, and each of whom shows us everything. The movie is an inconsequential trifle, awkward in exposition, embarrassing in dialogue, rather slapdash in narrative, but designed obviously to give the viewer a couple hours of pretty images of very pretty people. Rated R—that in itself ample evidence that XX is reserved for depicted penetration or at least tumescence.

And along comes *Hardcore*, starring George C. Scott as a splendidly upright Midwestern furniture manufacturer, a Calvinist, a smugly content Upright Citizen, whose daughter goes off to California with a group of her friends for some sort of evangelical youth conference, and promptly disappears. A private detective (Peter Boyle) eventually reports back with a hard-core porno flick, starring guess who. Daddy embarks then on a valiant crusade to find his daughter, resorting even to disguises and ruses to worm his way into the porno world so that

PARAMOUNT

"*The Warriors* has become a *cause celebre* because of the riots, large and small, and the few killings that occurred after various groups had seen the movie."

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he can locate the missing 17-year-old daughter. A whore (Season Hubley) helps him, and in due course he comes upon his daughter, who screams that he's never loved her enough, to which he protests that he loves her dearly, and to which she responds ok, I'll come home with you daddy. Weep. Embrace. Curtain.

In *Hardcore,* again rated R, we see only brief glimpses of what is presented to us as actual hard-core film. We see some naked men, fleetingly, we see the daughter topless and making faces, and then we see Scott's head blanking out the rest of the scene. A powerful moment, indeed, and everyone who watches TV has seen the ad for it: "*Oh My God, that's my daughter!*" At one point Scott, masquerading as a producer of hard-core flicks in order to find one of the men shown in the blue movie with his daughter, interviews a series of males. All but one remains clothed to our eyes, and the one who strips down part way is the one the father is looking for. The lad gets a nasty bashing by the outraged father, a little casual dose of queer-baiting is tossed in for good measure, and the story moves on.

Now what has been made is a soft-core movie which purports to show what it's really like out there in the bad old world of hard-core movies, of the hard-core life. What comes most vividly across, however, is the holier-than-thou insufferability of the world of the father, one at least some young people might reasonably be expected to abhor, and from which, surely, an occasional refugee has found sanctuary of a sort in the diametric opposite life: that of the utterly depraved. The movie is in some ways a test one can give oneself: does it make the "clean-cut" or the "slimy" world seem more repulsive? It rather excludes the middle, a fallacy in logic, albeit a commonplace in pop culture. And even though the ending cops out, the bulk of the film is intelligently acted, intriguing visually, and probably fairly accurate in its descriptions of the sex shop-sex flick-sex emporium "scene" of many big American cities, in this case, Los Angeles and briefly, San Francisco. The ironies of this film are these: it serves more to disparage the world it ostensibly glorifies, that of the goodly Christian moralists, than that which it tries to portray in such hideous images—at least some viewers, this one included, saw it that way. And despite its title and its theme it is, in fact, far less arousing than all of the other movies mentioned above; at least they will arouse some large portion of their intended audiences. Finally, to whatever extent the sort of thing that may for purposes of discussion be considered "hard core" is fairly depicted here, "hard core" is at once less sexy than what is usually considered "soft core," and obviously the latter is by now so easy to present to the American moviegoing public as accepted material, that those who rant about "hard core pornography" might well redirect their futile energies to the " "soft core" arena, where, really, the big commercial films have hit pay dirt. Hard-core stuff will always be made, shown, enjoyed, and derided; but on any night in America more people are seeing a newly accepted soft-core film, or a soft-core movie scene in some widely popular movie, than will see all the hard-core movies produced in this country during the entire year. That ought to set the Birchers' teeth on edge. It ought also to awaken in less paranoid folks' heads a few interesting reflections. ❑

LR's film critic is also critic-at-large on WNAC-TV (CBS) in Boston.

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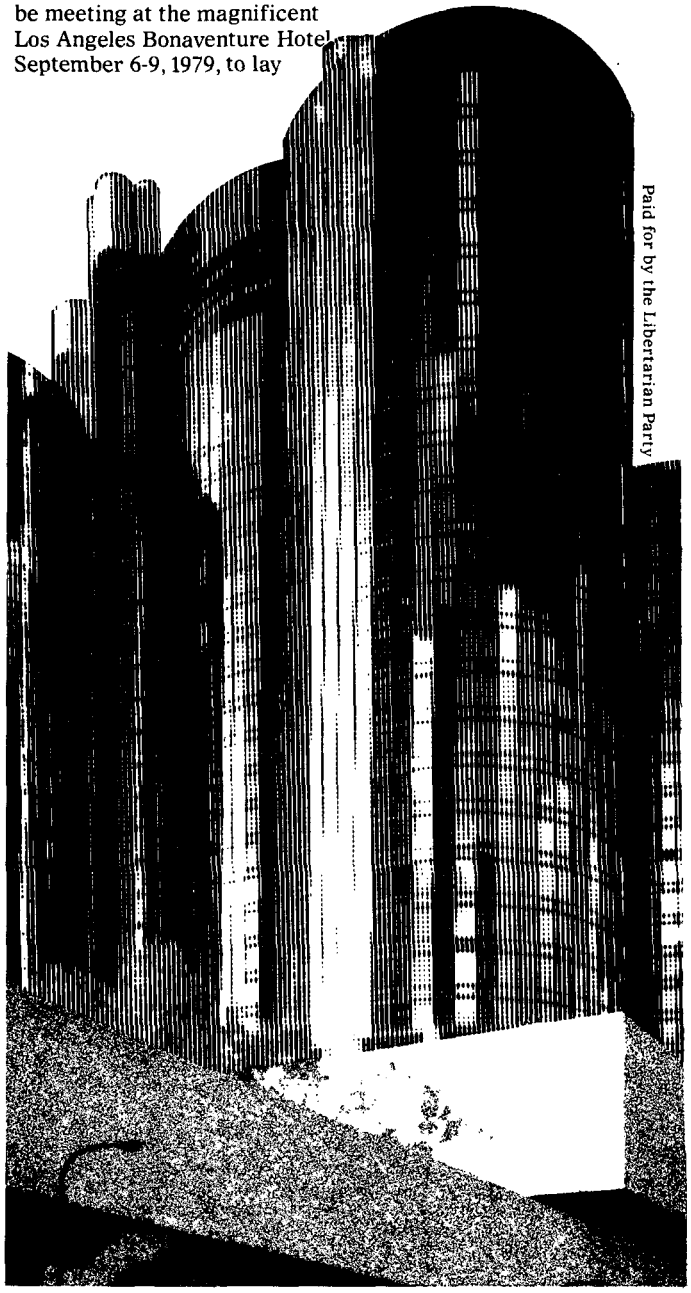

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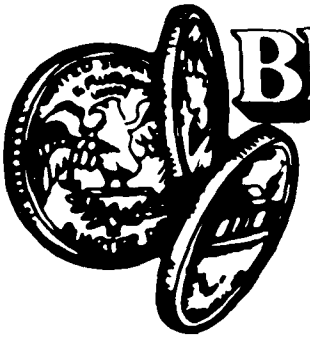

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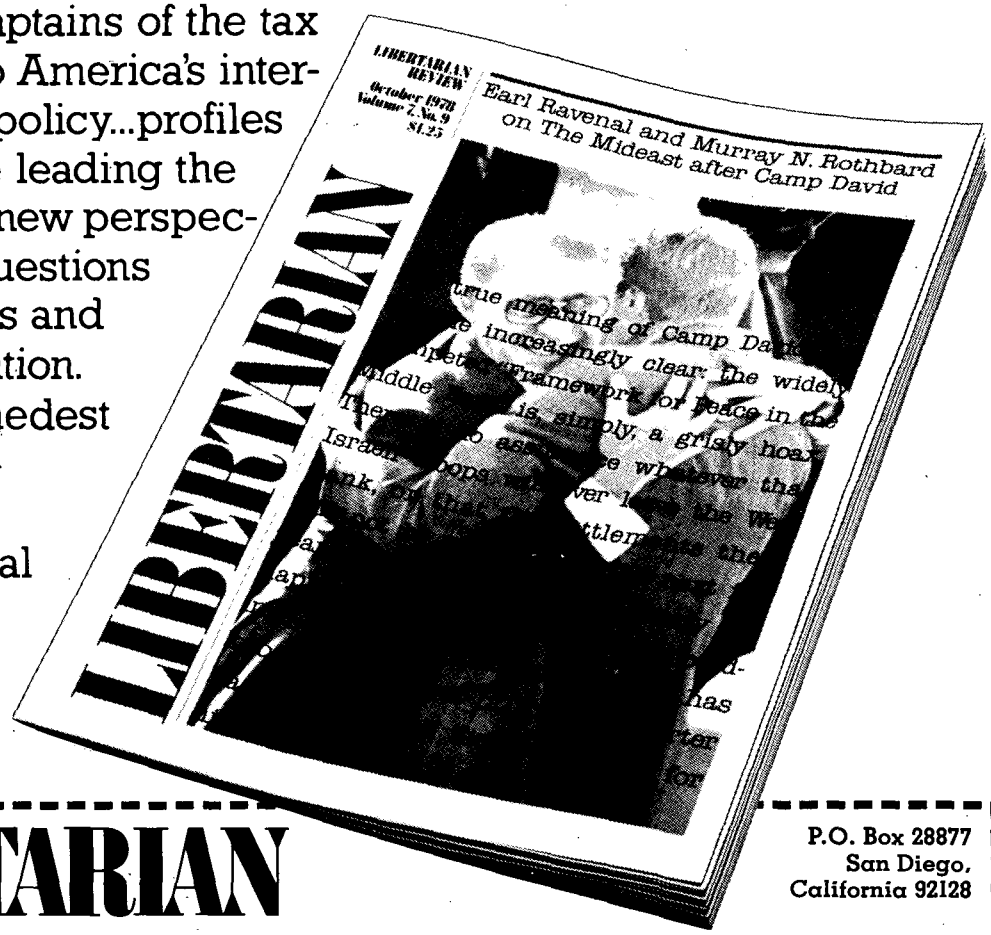

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